"YOU KNOW SOMETHING'S HAPPENING BUT YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS"

Bob Gessner, East High School, Phoenix

If you don't recognize my title as a Bob Dylan quote, you must read on. If you do recognize the quote, you will probably want to read on to find out what is happening. Alright, I'll tell you. What I want to do is show you how you can get your students to use some of the research that they have been doing for hundreds, maybe thousands of hours. I know, my students don't hang out in the library either. I'm talking about the music that they listen to. I will discuss how to use rock music in the classroom for fun and profit. I will probably emphasize the English classroom because of my personal bias. However, there is no reason why my suggestions cannot be used in a Social Studies or Health Education class. As a matter of fact, most of the suggestions and ideas have already been used successfully in those classes.

First, I shall define what I think is meant by the term "rock" music. I asked my Mass Media class to give me the types of rock music they enjoyed listening to. The list went as follows: soul, acid-rock, golden oldies, country western, jazz-rock, classical rock, funkadelic, maggotravia, blues and folk rock. Each of these headings has a list of groups or individual artists that specialize in their particular category. You may wonder how all of those headings fit under the umbrella title of "rock." That is exactly my point, they don't. Before 1956 popular music was known as "pop." Since then rock and roll moved into the scene and the term "rock" replaced "pop." Much of what is referred to as rock is not really rock at all. Rock has simply become popular music for the 12-32 age group. There is another common thread in the different types of music known as rock and that is the use of some of rock's innovations. For example, many blues artists have switched from playing a bottleneck acoustic type of guitar to an electric lead or pedal-steel guitar. Also the electric bass has replaced the large bass fiddle.

Now that you know what I mean by rock, you will be able to understand some of the following statistics from an article by David DeVoss that appeared in SOUND: THE SONY STUDENT GUIDE TO MUSIC '74/'75, "Last year rock lovers between the ages of 12 and 32 spent $2,000,000,000 for records and tapes plus another $150,000,000 to see their stars in concerts. That's twice the amount spent on network television and equal to the combined gross revenues of Broadway, pro sports and movies." Those staggering figures make me sit back and wonder how such an incredible force like that has almost completely escaped the attention of educators. It is true that during the past five or six years rock has been seeping into some classes from under the woodwork, then retreating. However, what you use and how you use it could be the difference between turning your class on to your message or having them tune you out.

Around 1967, some teachers with an ear to the drums of the natives, picked up "Sounds of Silence" by Simon and Garfunkel. They listened to the song, which was enjoying immense popularity, and found that the singers were actually saying something meaningful. What they were saying was true and it reflected the isolationist mood of a lot of people who thought that we don't communicate very well. Not only that, it was said poetically and put to music. Those teachers decided to use the song in their classes to see if they could get their students to discuss the message, and maybe learn some poetry techniques and terms. It was a huge success on a small scale. Today, "Sounds of Silence" is still being used in some places, even though most of the students were only 7-10 years old at the time of the song's popularity. The message is still there and the song is still great, but unless songs which the class is familiar with are used, the lesson may be in danger of losing the majority of the student's interest.

Once you open up your scope to include rock songs, possibilities will become apparent, not only to you, but to your students as well. An excellent example of this is seen in Gretchen B. Crafts' article in IMPROVING COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY TEACHING (Spring 1973) "Seducing Poetry Haters Into an Affair with Poetry." She describes the plan she used to make her "Introduction to Poetry" class more interesting. For example, she compared the thoughts expressed in George Harrison's song "Within You, Without You" with "The World Is Too Much With Us" by William Wordsworth or T.S. Eliot's "Lovesong of J. Alfred Prufrock." This is one way to show how each poet deals with a particular theme in a unique way. She cites some other examples, tells about the reactions she received from her class and describes her method of seduction in a very interesting article.

Before I move on to other aspects, I feel I should say a few more things about rock as poetry. Most lyrics are written in a poetic style and a good many of them contain a worthwhile message and use good technique. It is possible to teach poetry terms such as alliteration, rhyming couplet, meter, theme, personification, imagery, symbols, stereotypes and satire using lyrics, to name a few. You can also compare and contrast the treatment of a theme by various artists. However, there is one danger inherent in all this, that is, using the lyrics and discarding the music. In their article in the JOURNAL OF POPULAR CULTURE (Spring 1971), "The One-Dimensional Approach to Popular Music: A Research Note," R. Serge Denisoff and Mark Levine tell about what can happen. They give for an example, the song, "Shake, Rattle and Roll," to show how tone can change the meaning of the same lyrics. That song was first done by Joe Turner and he sang it stressing sexuality; Bill Haley also did it, but he stressed a reference to dancing; Elvis Presley did it and incorporated both messages, but he relied on the visual and vocal aspects to stress suggestiveness; finally Pat Boone sang it and made it into a Saturday night hop song. In the large majority of songs, the music is there for a reason, either to emphasize the mood or contradict the words. An example of this is in the Grateful Dead's version of the traditional blues song "Going Down the Road Feelin' Bad." The thought expressed in the title and the rest of the lyrics could never be believed from the mood of the music. The music and lyrics work together to make the message "I'm going down the road feeling bad right now, but I'll be feeling better when I get to where I'm going." I hope that's clear, now on to another idea.

A few rock stars have called themselves poets rather than songwriters or performers, although they did perform their poems. Jim Morrison, the late lead singer and songwriter for the once very popular group, the Doors, considered himself a poet. He penned a song in the late sixties which became the anthem for the ecological movement in some places, and also for political activists in other areas. This is an excellent example of how the same lyrics are interpreted two different ways. The passage of the song to which I am referring goes like this:

What have they done to the earth?

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I think that song would generate a good discussion, especially when played for the class because the performance is excellent.

As promised, I will move on to some other possible lessons in which rock music could be used. Schools have been criticized lately, for not preparing students to meet the world they will be entering upon graduation. One phenomenon the students are going to have to live with is change. I agree, this is nothing new, but as Postman and Weingartner point out in TEACHING AS A SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITY, what is changing is the rate of change. This is something the adults of today are having an awful lot of difficulty accepting. Change is changing faster all the time. We, as teachers, have the responsibility to acquaint our students with this concept. In his article, "Popular Music and Academic Enrichment in the Residence Halls" (NASPA JOURNAL, Winter 1974), B. Lee Cooper says, "One potentially beneficial suggestion in regard to analyzing causes and effects of social change over the past quarter century is to utilize the medium of popular music to highlight instances of evolutionary and revolutionary change." In one example he states a little further on, "the professor should challenge students to uncover examples of social and personal reactions to automation as they are depicted in popular lyrics." At the end of the article he suggests possible topics for which rock lyrics would be the text. The students could examine social change in areas such as religion, sex, war, alienation, drugs and poverty. He also presents a discography according to topics, which I will not recommend at this time because he has a better one in an article I will now mention.

In the December 1973 issue of SOCIAL EDUCATION, B. Lee Cooper expands his article and adapts it to fit the high school Social Studies classroom. I feel that any class can spend a few days in a semester dealing with these topics. He presents 11 topics with discography and discussion questions for each. I will list the general topics he develops and let you decide whether or not to pursue it further: "Self Image in a Changing Society," "Responding to Others in a Changing Society," "Technological Change," "Changing Image of Religious Music," "The Road to Integration in a Changing American Society," "Changing Language in a Dynamic Society," "Social and Political Issues in Flux," "The Process and Promise of Political Change," "Predictions and Premonitions of Social Change," and "Changing Status of Women in American Society," He also briefly mentions the themes of "Happiness is Music" and "Views of Parental Authority" expressed in songs.

Rather than list the songs Mr. Cooper uses for each of those topics and merely repeat his article, I will now suggest some groups and artists whose lyrics and songs I feel are particularly worthwhile. I've already mentioned Simon and Garfunkel's "Sounds of Silence," they have a number of albums and songs, all of which are excellent. In the following list you will note my prejudices and preferences, but I'll try to be as honest and informative as possible.

Alphabetically or in order of importance, the Beatles must lead the way, followed closely by Bob Dylan. For each of them there is an early period and a later period. Early Beatles were top 40 wonders with simplistic lyrics and catchy tunes. After the Rubber Soul album the Beatles are more complex both musically and lyrically. Dylan is the opposite. His early period is angry, rebellious, dissatisfied, obscure and complex. His lyrics are hard to untangle in some parts, incredibly imaginative and to the point in others. Later Dylan is mellower, and homier, more countrified than his early folksy self. Let me continue with the list. The following are, in my opinion, the finest songwriters and groups from the late sixties to the present. This list by no means is complete or in any order: Joni Mitchell, Phil Ochs, Tom Paxton, David Crosby, Stephen Stills, Neil Young, Stevie Wonder, Chuck Berry, Cat Stevens, James Taylor, The Who, Roger McGuinn, Leon Russell, Arlo Guthrie, Steppenwolf, Rolling Stones, Dave Mason, Van Morrison, Jackson Browne, Jesse Colin Young, Robert Hunter, The Grateful Dead, Jim Croce, B.B. King, Elton John, George Harrison, The Moody Blues, Frank Zappa, Jethro Tull and others too numerous to mention. From the artists I've named, you can depend on songs which can be applied to the topics I've previously mentioned. I'll admit I've left out a few

groups enjoying great popularity at this moment with high school kids such as: Black Sabbath, Black Oak Arkansas, Grand Funk Railroad and Deep Purple to name a few. I must confess, I've been too busy with the many good groups to spend time getting familiar with groups who disguise their simplistic lyrics with even more simplistic, repetitive noise. I am prepared to eat those words if anyone can show me just cause. So I will keep an open mind and move on to something else.

Now for a sample list of some songs which could be used in a class to show different attitudes towards war. It wasn't too long ago that we were directly involved in one and songwriters had a lot to say about it. Phil Ochs comes to mind as an anti-war songwriter with songs like, "Universal Soldier" in which he says, "Why is it always the young who fight the war for the elders?", "I Ain't Marchin' Anymore" is obvious, and "Draft Dodger Rag" which has as its subject a man with every symptom and situation the Army doesn't want. Tom Paxton sings of what patrol was like in "Talkin' Viet Nam Pot Luck Blues," Peter, Paul and Mary sing about a draft resister in "The Great Mandala." The Doors sing "The Unknown Soldier," Leon Russell and John Lennon both have versions of "Give Peace a Chance." Country Joe and the Fish have "I-Feel-Like-I'm-Fixin'-To-Die-Rag." Bob Dylan has "Masters of War" and "With God on Our Side." Let us not forget Barry Sadler and his "Ballad of the Green Berets."

Songs relating to the political nature of things are dominated by John Lennon. He has written and performed "All I want Is the Truth," "Revolution" and "Revolution #9." The Who have recorded "We Won't Get Fooled Again" and Arlo Guthrie has just released "Watergate."

An example of using songs to teach students about a touchy subject is the topic of drugs. Some Health Education classes have been using rock songs to show students how the stars view the problem. Students are more likely to believe a hero than a teacher it seems. Contrary to popular belief, not many songs urge the listeners to take drugs. In "Pusher Man" by Steppenwolf, Johnny Kay sings about the kind of justice he would give to a person who pushes heroin:

"I'd hang him where he stands
I'd shoot him if he runs"

He continues, singing about people walking around "with tombstones in their eyes." The song is a very strong statement against the use of drugs. Caution: the chorus of the song is "God Damn the Pusher Man." I hope that doesn't prevent any of you from using the song where it would fit, but I felt I should warn those who are more gentile. Neil Young sings "The Damage Done" in which he says "I saw the needle take another man." The Rolling Stones sing of a different, but more prevalent type of addiction in "Mother's Little Helper." That song is about a bored housewife who needs pills to help her sleep and pills to get going in the morning. The chorus goes something like this:

"Doctor please, some more of these,
Outside the door she took four more.
What a drag it is getting old."

That song works not only as anti-drugs, but also in showing the failure of some people to accept their lives and make constructive changes where necessary. Canned Heat has two songs with anti-drug messages, "Amphetamine Annie" and "Speed Kills."

I'll mention one more series of songs, this time with the theme of alienation and loneliness. I've already mentioned "Sounds of Silence" twice, so I'll go on from there. The Beatles have "Eleanor Rigby;" the Bee Gees do "New York Mining Disaster--1941" in which the disaster is the separation between the speaker and his own existence; Gene Pitney sings "Town Without Pity;" Barry McGuire does "Eve of Destruction;" Bob Dylan sings "Times They Are A-Changin';" Peter, Paul and Mary sing "Blowin' In the Wind;" the Guess Who (actual name, not a quick quiz) sing "American Woman;" Joe South does "Games People Play" which has become a standard

for "pop" singers such as Della Reese and even Mike Douglas! Janis Ian's first hit "Society's Child" deals with the end of a black-white high school love affair; and Ray Stevens' "Mr. Businessman" tells us to live and see rather than wildly grasp for every dollar sign and missing out on life.

An important thing to remember is that rock is not just music. It is a life style. The youth take their examples, their codes, their current phrases from rock music. In "Music and Youth: Sounds and Significance" (SOCIAL EDUCATION, April 1974) Peter M. Adams says, "Hair, clothes, and language were all part, but the central unifying force of the subculture was music." You will find a few students in every class who do not watch television because they are listening to their stereo. These students will get involved with any lesson with music in order to show what they know in their special field. All you need is a few songs to get the idea of what you want to accomplish clear. The students will take it from there. They will be very helpful in updating any information and supplying explanations of anything you might not be clear on. They will also suggest other songs that the class could discuss. You should have the equipment to play the songs being discussed. This will enhance the discussion, refresh the memories of those that haven't heard the song in a while, and give those that don't know the song a chance to become familiar with it. A dittoed sheet with the lyrics will also be helpful. For those of you who would like further information on this subject, I'll close with a list of books and periodicals which will be very helpful.

Tom Goldstein, SONGS OF PEACE, FREEDOM AND PROTEST (Fawcett Crest: Greenwich, Conn., 1970)
Richard Goldstein, THE POETRY OF ROCK (Bantam: NY, 1969)
David Morse, GRANDFATHER ROCK (Dell: NY, 1972)

Periodicals
JOURNAL OF POPULAR CULTURE, Bowling Green, Kentucky
ROLLING STONE MAGAZINE, San Francisco, California
SATURDAY REVIEW OF THE ARTS

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SHOPTALK:

If you're interested in locating some historical material on popular culture, the Arno Press (330 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10017) recently re-published 27 books covering popular culture in America, 1800-1925. The books include things like Horatio Alger's MAKING HIS WAY: OR FRANK COURTNEY'S STRUGGLE UPWARD, Ned Buntline's BUFFALO BILL: AND HIS ADVENTURES IN THE WEST, Walter Camp's AMERICAN FOOTBALL, Nicholas Carter's THE STOLEN PAY TRAIN, Martha Finley's ELSIE DINSMORE, Emmanuel Haldeman-Julius's THE FIRST HUNDRED MILLION, John J. McGraw's MY THIRTY YEARS IN BASEBALL, and Paul Whiteman and Mary Margaret McBride's JAZZ.

"I find sports a better area than most to look for truth. A great hockey goalie, describing his life on ice, once said, 'That puck comes so hard, it could take an eye. I've had 250 stitches and I don't like pain. I get so nervous before every game, I lost my lunch.'
'Some football players,' I said to the goalie, whose name is Glenn Hall, 'say that when they're badly scared they pray.'
Hall looked disgusted. 'If there is a God,' he said, 'let's hope he's doing something more important than watching hockey games.' Offhand I can't recall a better sermon." (from Roger Kahn, HOW THE WEATHER WAS, NY: NAL, 1973,p. 5)

FORMULA FICTION AND LITERATURE STUDY

Richard D. Western, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee

Popular fiction is formula fiction. Detective stories, cowboy stories, Gothic romances, adolescent novels, autobiographies of sports heroes and happy hookers--all, we know by virtue of intuition and scholarship, tend to be formulaic. To some reviewers and critics, that characterization is deliberately pejorative; to others, and especially to the new students of popular culture, it is merely descriptive. Because adolescents read popular fiction more willingly than they read serious literature, and because people argue vividly(Pap or protein? In defense of trash!) over the question whether they should, English teachers have reason to familiarize themselves with the concept formula fiction in order to determine what their pedagogical stance will be toward the fiction it designates.

One point is very clear. "Formula" in formula fiction is used loosely and (by some reviewers) for rhetorical effect. A formula is a determinate, fail-safe set of instructions for the performance of some task, as in "compute the area of a rectangle by multiplying its width times its length." But there are no comparably determinate, fail-safe instructions for the task of writing popular fiction; if there were, we might be surprised to learn how many of our colleagues would be pleased to obtain the formula(s) and set about writing popular fiction, with the ease with which children use formulas in arithmetic computation but with far greater reward.

Strictly speaking, then, a writer who becomes skilled at producing formula fiction learns to work not with formulas but with a set of maxims, rules of art, or conventions. According to John Cawelti, for example, the conventions of the Western story have to do with predictable settings, characters, and situations. (John G. Cawelti, THE SIX-GUN MYSTIQUE, Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green U Popular Press, n.d.) The setting is a frontier setting--tenuously linked to civilization, perilously close to the lawless wilderness. The characters are "townspeople" (e.g., pioneers, schoolmarms), associated with the frontier; "savages" (e.g., bloodthirsty redskins, rustlers), associated with the wilderness; and heroes, who are comfortable in either setting. The situation or pattern of action is that the townspeople are put upon by the savages: the advance of civilization upon the wilderness is threatened. The hero--mobile, independent, controlled--vanquishes the savages and resolves the conflict in favor of the advance of civilization.

Why should such fiction be disparaged? Suppose we agree to call it formula fiction: why mere formula fiction, and why say it contemptuously?

One answer has to do with the modern aesthetic criterion of originality: serious art, the criterion holds, should be original. Cawelti himself contrasts popular fiction and other fiction on this basis. But what of the originality criterion itself? What is its basis? A historical account of its roots in Romanticism can be given, (Thomas McFarland, "The Originality Paradox," NEW LITERARY HISTORY, Spring 1974, 447-476.) but that sort of account only raises the question why readers should adhere to Romantic aesthetics.

A deeper sort of answer has to do with an apparent function of highly conventional fiction, a cognitively conservative function. According to Susan Wittig,

> Formulaic narratives, highly stylized, carefully ordered and regulated by cultural agreement, constitute a defense of the status quo; they reflect the culture's ideal world--imbalances ideally balanced, riddles resolved, perfection attained through prescribed language and prescribed action. (Susan Wittig, "Formulaic Style and the Problem of Redundancy," CENTRUM: WORKING PAPERS OF THE MINNESOTA CENTER FOR ADVANCED STUDIES IN LANGUAGE, STYLE, AND LITERARY THEORY, Fall 1973, 133.)

This tendency to impart conventional wisdom, to mark off the world in familiar ways, accounts, presumably, for much of the popularity of popular fiction. "Will civilization advance through the frontier and push back the wilderness? Of course, and that's the way it ought to be; you can't fight progress." But it accounts, too, for pejorative uses of "formula" among people whose view is that art should upset us by providing depictions of novel possibilities:

> The mode of perception and the system of values that are demonstrated by /formulaic/ style are remote from us, and the insistence on the preservation of tradition which is the source of the power and vitality that initially inspired them has little hold on the twentieth century imagination. (Susan Wittig, p. 133)

Where the fiction in question is fiction to be read by adolescents, in schools, this matter of cognitive conservatism takes on added importance. Literature study has historically been viewed as part of the schools' way of influencing the social and moral development of students. Accordingly, "wholesome" fiction has been sought, or, more recently, "realistic" fiction, the assumption being, in each case, that students will not merely read fiction as fiction: they will learn something about life from it, and therefore the fiction they learn from had better have in it the currently approved matter to learn.

But if students are to read fiction in this way, and if some of the fiction they read is popular fiction, what sorts of things will they be learning? Consider, for example, the stock heroines in modern Gothics, as analyzed by Joanna Russ. (Joanna Russ, "Somebody's Trying to Kill Me and I Think It's My Husband: the Modern Gothic," JOURNAL OF POPULAR CULTURE, Spring 1973, 666-691.) They are idle, modest, preternaturally concerned with houses and clothing, and their sense of personal worth depends upon the interest taken in them by the Super Male. Or consider the teen-age characters in popular adolescent fiction, as analyzed by Barbara Martinec. (Barbara Martinec, "Popular--But Not Just Part of the Crowd: Implication of Formula Fiction for Teenagers," ENGLISH JOURNAL, March 1971, 339-344.) In the world in which these characters appear, immaturity is equated with isolation from a group; all problems turn out to be soluable; adults, however, are of little help--they mean well but are ineffectual; solutions, when they do come, are bestowed, not earned; and maturity finally comes when a troubled character learns to conform and be happy. Studies like Russ's and Martinec's reveal clearly why many readers find popular fiction pernicious, and especially so as material for use with adolescents trained by teachers--pious teachers and irascible ones--to look to fiction for lessons on life. From such material, it may seem, students will not easily acquire the humanistic values, the well-bred insolence, that have also been assumed as goals of literature study.

Some teachers, accordingly, will use popular fiction only grudgingly, as a "stepping stone" to serious literature, and others, hopeful of saving young readers from it altogether, will not use it at all. Each approach, I think, is unnecessarily fastidious.

Popular fiction, just because it is formulaic, is uniquely useful as material from which students might learn how to read fiction as fiction.

To read fiction as fiction, a reader must know more than the semantic and syntactic rules he uses to comprehend ordinary language; he must also know, tacitly or consciously, appropriate literary conventions. (See Martin Steinmann, Jr., "Convention," in PRINCETON ENCYCLOPEDIA OF POETRY AND POETICS, ed. Alex Preminger, Princeton: Princeton U Press, 1965, pp. 152-153; and Steinmann, "Cumulation, Revolution, and Progress," NEW LITERARY HISTORY, Spring 1974, 477-490.) Consider an example:

> If we look only at the text...of OTHELLO...we have a puzzle. Othello's conduct in the early scenes of the play leads us to infer that he is naturally noble,

> calm, unsuspicious, unjealous, and intelligent; but his believing Iago's calumnies against Desdemona without proof or investigation leads us to infer that he is naturally either pathologically suspicious and jealous or extraordinarily stupid. A related puzzle is that, if we opt for the latter inference, we cannot explain the power that everyone agrees the play has: a psychopath's or a fool's unjustified killing of his wife does not arouse emotion of the kind by OTHELLO. (Steinmann, "Cumulation, Revolution, and Progress," 487-488.)

The solution of the puzzle will not come merely from knowing how to read, nor from speculating that the play teaches us contradictory things about Moorish princes. The reader must know a literary convention, the convention of the calumniator credited. This convention, according to which a character believes "at the critical moment the detrimental thing that is cunningly told," (E.E. Stoll, ART AND ARTIFICE IN SHAKESPEARE, Cambridge: Cambridge U Press, 1933, p. 6, quoted by Steinmann, "Cumulation, Revolution, and Progress," 487) is one of several upon which Elizabethan drama depends. And, given it, a reader has no puzzle. Othello believes Iago because that's the sort of thing such characters as he do. Moreover, the power of the play is accounted for: "the degeneration of Othello's character--his way of going from good fortune to bad--because of the machinations of a villain does arouse emotion..." (Steinmann, "Cumulation, Revolution, and Progress," 487-488.)

Attention to convention, then, is central to the act of interpretation. Since popular fiction is patently conventional or formulaic, it is good material for students to practice upon. To help students do this, English teachers should study the many analyses of popular fiction that have recently been appearing in THE JOURNAL OF POPULAR CULTURE and elsewhere. They would do no less, the conscientious ones, if they wanted to arm themselves to teach other unfamiliar genres. Given knowledge of the various convention patterns of popular fiction, teachers can teach them directly, where that seems appropriate, or they can use their knowledge to plan inquiry instruction, the object of which is to getthe students to formulate the conventions. Either sort of instruction is impeccably literary in nature, regardless of the texts it employs. And either seems more likely than censorious remarks about "trash" to equip students to deal archly and circumspectly, as they should, with the cognitive conservatism of popular fiction.

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SHOPTALK:

Are hamburgers symbols of the domination of the world by the United States? Yes, if you believe the Swedish Communist Party.

> "Swedish Communists are trying to bring McDonald's 'Golden Arches' tumbling down because they say franchised hamburger chains are 'a danger to the working people.'
> If the Communists had their way, a 'Big Mac' hamburger would be a thing of the past in Stockholm.
> An irate party member accused 'the American cultural imperialism of spreading food not native to Sweden.' He lamented that the hamburgers don't have any essential vitamins and minerals.
> Arne Soederkvist, chairman of the Communist representatives on the Stockholm City Council, said in an interview that the hamburger chains not only ruin the customer's health because of the poor nutritional value but also because 'the people have to eat very fast and under pressing conditions.'
> Soederkvist lamented that the final blow of the chains was that they 'mostly employ very young people and the work is a great strain to a teen-ager.'"
> (SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER, Feb. 7, 1975, p. 13)

TAPES OF OLD-TIME RADIO IN THE ENGLISH CLASS

Until a few years ago, teachers interested in working with the radio shows of the 1930's and 1940's and even early 1950's were nearly hamstrung by the inability to get hold of scripts or tapes or records of those mysteries, soap operas, comedies, or variety shows. During the last few years, a number of companies have sprung up dealing in tapes and records from the archives of old-time radio. Anyone interested in knowing addresses and other information should write the Popular Culture Center, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio 43403, requesting Volume I, No. I (January 1974) of POPULAR CULTURE AIRWAVES BULLETIN. As the editor of that issue notes in his preface, "It is odd, but explicable, that the most important medium of popular cultural expression receives the least critical, scholarly attention. For one thing broadcasting has been looked down upon by intellectuals, academics and sophisticates, sharing with the comics, perhaps, the lowest rung on the artistic ladder. Though students of popular culture give lip-service to their desire to study popular entertainment, a survey of the literature of the field shows that film, rock music, and popular literature command most of the attention. Another reason for this situation, however, is the relative difficulty with which broadcasting materials may be studied. Unlike the above-mentioned sources, radio and television scripts, tapes, films and other useful materials have been essentially unavailable to scholars for practical and legal reasons."

While getting the first of the POPULAR CULTURE AIRWAVES BULLETIN will provide you with a vast amount of information, it will not provide you with the programs available or their cost. The only way to take care of that is to order some of the catalogs. Below I list only a few of the companies, particularly the ones I have ordered from and think highly of, and some of the tapes available from them. Most of the catalogs or supplements run to 20 or 50 or even more pages and the wealth of material available is almost beyond belief. If you're over 35, many of the programs I cite below will seem familiar, and if they somehow sometimes seem less good than nostalgia would suggest, they often are even better than you remembered them and many of them would work well with secondary students, and some of them might work well with elementary kids. If the music on the variety shows on these tapes sometimes seems almost painfully out-of-touch with today's reality, many of the mysteries and science fiction shows hold up well. The comedies, particularly the situation comedies, often hold up poorly with the exceptions of comedians like Jack Benny or Bob and Ray or Fred Allen. The soap operas often seem a pale imitation of today's often more relevant shows, but even "Young Widder Brown" or "Stella Dallas" or "Ma Perkins" or "Portia Faces Life" may work if they're used as comparison materials with contemporary television, and even old soap operas can be used to teach cliches and stereotypes in fiction. The drama shows may seem slightly dated, but the opportunity to hear the voices of Cary Grant or Humphrey Bogart and any number of other Hollywood stars may intrigue students. The adventure shows hold up very well, particularly shows like "I Love a Mystery" or "Suspense" or "Escape" or "Sam Spade." Here are just a few companies and a few of the tapes they have.

Mar-Bren Sound Company (P.O. Box 4099, Rochester, NY 14610). As far as I know, this company still charges $5.50 for each hour of taping (2 hours for $9.75; 3 hours for $14.00) recorded at 3 3/4 ips. Cassettes are available though they are inordinately expensive (as they are with all these companies). Mar-Bren put out one basic catalog and then has put out 5 supplements, each listing specific programs (alphabetized by the title of the program) usually with a fairly long summary plus running time. For the record, the annotations and the information generally provide a wealth of material for anybody even curious about radio tapes. Whoever writes the material obviously knows the program and that person is obviously enthusiastic and accurate.

The Radio Vault (Box 9032, Wyoming, MI 49509). The last information I have (and with everything else going up in price, the figures cited are probably wrong) is

that the Radio Vault charges $4.00 for an hour's tape at 3 3/4 ips on quarter track and $5.00 on half track. The programs listed cover some material I can't find in Mar-Bren, but the annotations are short and often pretty chaotically arranged.

McCoy's Recording, Inc. (P.O. Box 1069, Richland, WA 99352). McCoy's like the others that follow deals primarily in ready-made tapes, in other words the buyer buys (at a much lower price per hour of tape) 4 or 6 hours of taped shows. The tapes are already put together and on a one-hour reel of tape, the companies are able to put on two hours since radio was a monaural and 1 one-hour show will be on the left channel and 1 one-hour show will be on the right channel--obviously, you need a stereo tape recorder for these ready-made tapes. You may not get all you would like on a 4 or 6 hour ready-made tape, but you will get a better deal economically and you will often get 2 1/2 hours you want plus 1 1/2 hours you didn't know but find interesting. Some of the ready-made tapes distributed by McCoy's include

Reel 52, 1800' (6 hours)
DIMENSION X, "Time and Time Again"
DIMENSION X, "Mars Is Heaven"
DIMENSION X, "The Lights on Precipice Peak"
ARMCHAIR DETECTIVE, "The Case of the Impatient Heir"
THE WHISTLER, "Mr. Pettibone's Last Journey"
SUSPENSE, "Search for Isabelle" with Red Skelton
SUSPENSE, "The Butcher's Wife" with Kirk Douglas
I LOVE A MYSTERY, "Richard's Curse" (2 1/2 hours)
SUSPENSE, "The Great Train Robbery" with Fred McMurray
Reel 190, 1800' (6 hours)
BBC SCIENCE FICTION, "The Day of the Triffids" (3 hours)
DEVIL AND MR. O, "Mr. Freak"
DEVIL AND MR. O, "Gravestone"
SUSPENSE, "Reprieve"
BEYOND MIDNIGHT, "A Smile to Drive You Mad"
BLACK MASS, "The Flies"
SUSPENSE, "Leinengen Versus the Ants"

Remember Radio (P.O. Box 2513, Norman, OK 73069). This company, like several others, has different prices for different kinds of recording tape available, either Shamrock or Scotch. The price as far as I know it for 6 hours of shows is $10.00 (for Shamrock tape) or $12.00 (for Scotch tape). Again, Remember Radio deals in ready-made tapes. Example:

Reel 168
MARK DILLON, U.S. MARSHALL (The pilot of what later became "Gunsmoke")
GUNSMOKE, "Matt and Chester Help the Hantrees"
GUNSMOKE, "The Executioner"
GUNSMOKE, "The New Hotel" (rehearsal with many goofs)
GUNSMOKE, "The New Hotel" (broadcast version)
GUNSMOKE, "Young Eddie Kates"
HAVE GUN, WILL TRAVEL, "Woman in Fear"
HAVE GUN, WILL TRAVEL, "The Search for Dr. Amos Bradbury"
HAVE GUN, WILL TRAVEL, "Paladin Guides James Brunswick"
LONE RANGER, "The Faceless Bandit"
LONE RANGER, "The Hal and Ruth Creston Story"
THE HALLS OF IVY, "Putting Dad Back to School"

Nostalgic Radio (Box 29, Peoria, IL 61601). Again, this company deals in ready-made tapes, the most intriguing of them being Reel 103 with a 4 hour (8 chapters) radio production of Tolkien's THE HOBBIT first produced on BBC Radio.

Robert Mussehl (Rt. 1, Box 33, Brooklyn, WI 53521). This company deals in something slightly different. You must order 2 or 4 or 6 hours worth of tape (the prices I have, probably out-of-date, are $5.50 for 2 hours of quarter track tape

and $8.50 for 4 hours of quarter track tape and $10.50 for 6 hours of quarter track tape), but the specific programs you ask for will be put on in the sequence you want, something of a compromise between the expensive custom-made tapes which charge something like $5.00 or $6.00 per hour and the less expensive ready-made tapes. The catalog is not terribly long, but this company has some excellent "Goon Shows" (the BBC comedy show starring Peter Sellers) and "Fred Allen Shows" and "I Love a Mystery" and "Dimension X" and "The Mysterious Traveler" and "The Shadow" and "Vic and Sade" and "X-Minus One," among others. A catalog and company worth taking a close look at.

Radio Reruns (P.O. Box 724, Redmond, WA 98052). The primary business is ready-made tapes on quarter track, 4 hours for $8.00, 6 hours for $10.00, 8 hours for $14.00. I've done enough business with this company to be sure that they do quality recording and what they say you'll get, you will indeed get. The ready-made tapes are sometimes a pretty mixed bag, though frequently all the tapes will be of one show, for example "X-Minus One," or "Bob and Ray" or "Suspense" or "Gunsmoke." Some of their mixed bags are all of the same kind of show, for example all mysteries, all comedy, all soap opera. Some of the tapes I have liked very much are listed below:

Reel 240, 1200' (4 hours)--8 ½hour mysteries
PAT NOVAK, (an early Jack Webb radio mystery)
CRIME PHOTOGRAPHER, SAM SPADE, GANGBUSTER, MR. AND MRS. NORTH, DAVID HARDING, ADVENTURES OF MAISIE, FBI IN PEACE AND WAR

Reel 316,1200' (4 hours)--16 15-minute soap operas
YOUNG WIDDER BROWN, VALIANT LADY, JOHN'S OTHER WIFE, MA PERKINS, OUR GAL SUNDAY, ROAD OF LIFE, LORENZO JONES, MARY NOBLE BACKSTAGE WIFE, LIFE CAN BE BEAUTIFUL, FRONT PAGE FARRELL, STELLA DALLAS, JUST PLAIN BILL, AUNT JENNY, EASY ACES, MYRT AND MARGE, DAVID HARUM.

Reel 544, 1800' (6 hours)--12 episodes from the GOON SHOW

Reel 19, 1200' (4 hours)--8 episodes from the BBC THEATRE ROYALE
DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE with Laurence Olivier, BARDEL VS PICKWICK with Laurence Olivier, SIRE DE MALETROIT'S DOOR with Robert Donat, THE INSPECTOR GENERAL with Laurence Olivier, BLACK MATE with Ralph Richardson, HALF AN HOUR with Ralph Richardson, DOCTOR KANOCK with Robert Morley, THE ASPERN PAPERS with Ralph Richardson.

Reel 1029, 1200' (4 hours)-- 8 ½hour episodes of ESCAPE
"Present Tense," "Three Skeleton Key," "Blood Bath," "The Country of the Blind," "She," "A Diamond As Big as the Ritz," "The Sire de Maletroit's Door," "Evening Primrose."

Reel 998, 1200' (4 hours)--8 ½hour episodes of the JACK BENNY SHOW

Reel 130, 1800' (6 hours)--2 complete shows of I LOVE A MYSTERY
"Faith, Hope, and Charity," and "Bury Your Dead,Arizona"

Reel 1016, 1200' (4 hours)--8 ½hour FRED ALLEN SHOWS

Reel 737, 1200' (4 hours)--8 science fiction shows, 3 DIMENSION X, 5 X-MINUS ONE

Reel 1886, 1200' (4 hours)--8 shows from SUSPENSE
including "The Most Dangerous Game" with Orson Welles

Reel 201, 1800' (6 hours)--2 shows from I LOVE A MYSTERY
"The Battle of the Century" and "Temple of the Vampires" (the latter the greatest of all the I LOVE A MYSTERY shows--not complete but much worth hearing)

SOME USES OF GRAFFITI

Frank D'Angelo, Arizona State University

Clad only in socks and sneakers, about 15 male students streaked across the campus at Arizona State University around March of 1974. A few coeds, caught up in the streaking madness, responded by taking off their clothes and running, nude as noodles, outside their dormitories. On campuses all over the United States, naked students were bringing traffic to a cheerful halt. Some people responded to the streaking with tolerance and good humor; others reacted with sterm indignation. Some psychologists called it ritualistic spring madness; others referred to it as irreverence toward social values.

Shortly thereafter, a graffito commemorating the event appeared on the side of a church: STREAKERS REPENT; YOUR END IS IN SIGHT. Other graffiti soon followed:

Streaking gives you rosy cheeks.
Someone streaked in church, but they caught him by the organ.
Streaking: the unclad fad.
Streaking: the epidermis epidemic.

What all of this goes to illustrate is that graffiti, perhaps more than any other popular art form, express contemporary events, current issues, social values, and mores with wit, good humor, satire, insight, and creativity. As one graffitist put it, "Today's headlines are tomorrow's graffiti."

Graffiti are crude drawings, inscriptions. slogans, and writings scraped, scratched, scribbled, and scrawled on fences, walls, sidewalks, trees, desks, and other public surfaces. They deal with almost every imaginable subject: current events, politics, social problems, racism, war, sex, religion, drugs, ecology, the economy, famous people, literature, movies, T.V., and commercials.

Despite their sometimes crudeness and coarseness, they have an honorable antiquity in Pompeii, Rome, and Egypt. In fact, the term graffiti is one that was originally used by archaeologists to describe the casual drawings and writings found on ancient buildings and monuments in Pompeii and Egypt and in the Roman catacombs. The word graffito (pl. graffiti) is derived from the Italian verb graffiare, meaning "to scratch." The word graffiare, in turn, seems to be related to the Italian word grafio (a pencil or stylus) and to the Latin word graphium, from the Greek word graphein, "to write." This derivation makes sense because sharp instruments like the stylus were used to write on stones and plaster. Today, of course, the graffitist uses felt tip pens, lipstick, chalk, and spray paint to practice his art.

Because they reflect current events and social values, because they use language and wit and creativity, and because they are so entertaining, I believe that graffiti can be used effectively in the language curriculum. In the remainder of this paper, therefore, I would like to suggest some possible ways of using graffiti in the English classroom. The following are a few of these ways:

First, ask each student to bring to class from five to ten examples of graffiti that he has either copied from walls or other public surfaces or that he has gotten from friends. Then collect these graffiti, put them on dittoes (eliminating the duplicates), and return them to the students. In a class of 30 students, you can collect anywhere from 150 to 300 graffiti. After these are returned to the students, discuss with them ways of classifying the material for subsequent use: for example, thematically, stylistically, and so forth.

Second, consider ways that graffiti can be handled as literature. Many students, turned off by more traditional literary forms, will delight in the wit, humor, ingenuity, and creativeness of this popular literary form. You might begin, for example, by asking your students to compare graffiti with other literary forms such as the

proverb, the maxim, the adage, the aphorism, and the epigram. Point out the similarities and the differences that exist among these literary forms. For example, all are concise, familiar expressions that contain some truth. Proverbs, however, often deal with general truths ("He who hesitates is lost"), whereas graffiti usually deal with particualr truths ("The American Dream has become a nightmare"). Quite often, graffiti parody original proverbs, as in the following examples:

Love they neighbor; but don't get caught.
Familiarity breeds contempt ...and children.
Blessed are the meek, for they shall inhibit the earth.

But just as often, graffiti are written in a style that makes them almost indistinguishable from proverbs. One basic difference, however, is that graffiti usually present their truths in a humorous, cynical, or ironic fashion:

If life gives you lemons, make lemonade.
Opportunity only knocks once, but temptation leans on the doorbell.
Today is no better than yesterday; so much for progress.

Whereas maxims are generally moral sayings dealing with rules of conduct derived from practical experience, graffiti ridicule individuals and institutions which hide behind conventional moral codes:

Dr. Ruben doesn't know everything.
Ann Landers smokes pot.
Jacqueline Susann cleans up with dirt.

But like maxims, graffiti can also be sententious:

Love comes in all colors.
Not to decide is to decide.
You never get a second chance to make a good first impression.

Graffiti also resemble mottoes ("In God we trust--all others strictly cash") and slogans:

William F. Buckley for God.
Hire the morally handicapped.
Use errogenous zone numbers.

Consequently, the teacher can point out how slogan graffiti often deal humorously or satirically with significant social and political figures and events.

The literary form that graffiti seem to resemble the most, however, is the epigram, a concise poem or phrase which makes a witty or pointed observation and which often concludes with a satirical twist. Writers such as Martial, Ben Jonson, Alexander Pope, Oscar Wilde, and Ambrose Bierce used the epigram because of its wit and satiric bite. In fact, most graffiti are examples of satire in that they are usually caustic, ironic, biting, coarse, bawdy, vitriolic, and urbane. The teacher, then, can point out the characteristics of satire in graffiti, especially the techniques that the graffitist uses to make a satiric point.

Third, after considering the relationship between graffiti and other literary forms, ask your students to consider the literary and stylistic devices that the graffitist uses to make a satiric point, to make a pointed observation, to play on words, to turn an ingenious phrase, or to make a wry or humorous comment. The following are a few examples of graffiti which use these techniques:

Alliteration

Peanut butter is better than pot.
Pop the pill for pleasure.
Muzzle Muzak.

Rhyme

Noise pollution needs a sound solution.
Be thrifty; go fifty.
Women's Lib, not Adam's rib.

Metaphor and Simile

People are like beer cans; they crush when you step on them.
Watergate has sprung a leak.
Agnew is like the sea; he makes you sick.

Repetition

A friend with a weed is a friend indeed.
Real life calls for a real trip.
Report obscene mail to an obscene female.

Apposition

TV: the eternal rectangle.
A thin book: Who's Who in Poland.
Arab oil: blackmail.

Parallelism

Elsie the cow is on grass; Elmer sniffs glue.
Preserve wildlife; throw a party.
Stay in school and be up to know good.

Antithesis

Sin now--pay later.
Katy Winters smells o.k., but she has bad breath.
Ban low performance drivers, not high performance cars.

Pun

Get high on helium; it's a gas.
Avis Hertz.
Disneyland is a Mickey Mouse outfit.

Irony

Sleeping Beauty takes Nightol.
Janis Joplin gargles with Drano.
Mark Spitz has water on the brain.

Allusion

Look Homeward, pregnant angel.
Betsy Ross was an old sew and sew.
Marquis de Sade really knew how to hurt a guy.

If possible, get your students to determine how the particular stylistic device is used to make a particular point.

Fourth, ask students to discuss the language of graffiti. Graffiti are an excellent source of contemporary idioms ("Do unto others; then split;" "Water pollution is dirty pool"), slang ("Howard Hughes is out of sight;" "Courdoroy pants are groovy"), drug terms ("Travel cheaply; drop acid;" "Batman is a junkie"), racial slang ("Moby Dick was a honkie;" "Kill a kike for the Third Reich"), and clichés ("Bambi really knew how to pass the buck;" "Moses was beating around the bush"). Graffiti can also be used to teach the linguistic processes of word formation and change, as in the following examples: clipping ("My brother was killed in Nam;" "A bust is an unexpected narc at the door"); blending ("This is hay fever sneason"); compounding ("Pot smokers are cop-outs;" "Don't be so uptight about life; no one ever got out of it alive"), derivation ("Raquel Welched;" "Don't Californicate Arizona"), and neologisms ("Zap! You're sterile;" "Never buy your smack from a coprophiliac").

Fifth, suggest to your students some compositional uses of graffiti. Many students, who are bored with traditional theme assignments, delight in writing about graffiti. The following are possible assignments in composition which ask the student to use graffiti as the basis of analysis themes, classification themes, exemplification themes, and so forth:

1. Select a single stylistic category such as the pun or antithesis and write a short essay in which you analyze about a dozen or more graffiti showing how the stylistic technique is used to make a satiric or humorous point.
2. Classify graffiti according to style or content. Then write a classification theme in which you discuss the style or the content.
3. Write an essay in which you explain the significance of one of the following quotations:

a. "Each graffito expresses a thought, wish, or attitude."
b. "The major form of creativity in America today is graffiti."
c. "Graffiti are attempts to express a personal identity."

4. Write an essay discussing the humor found in graffiti. Does the humor have any value beyond that of a good belly laugh?
5. Write an essay in which you analyze and discuss graffiti of one particular kind, for example, graffiti relating to school or college, or those dealing with crime, drugs, famous people, etc.
6. Write a comparison and contrast essay in which you examine the similarities and differences between:
   a. slogans and graffiti,
   b. proverbs and graffiti,
   c. maxims and graffiti,
   d. epigrams and graffiti.
7. Write an essay discussing the use of diction in graffiti.

Finally, you might ask your students to engage in a variety of activities relating to the study of graffiti. The following are just a few of the many possibilities:

1. Discuss the kinds of places and locations where the graffiti were found. Did the location have anything to do with the context?
2. Discuss ways in which graffiti might be important to the sociologist, the psychologist, and the linguist.
3. Have students collect and analyze pictorial graffiti.
4. Discuss the moral value of graffiti.
5. Ask students if they are familiar with the way graffiti have been used thematically and symbolically in novels, stories, and poems. For example, how are graffiti used thematically in THE CATCHER IN THE RYE?
6. Ask students to write graffiti which are parodies of T.V. commercials, slogans, lines from literature, and so forth.
7. Put up poster paper on one wall of your classroom and encourage your students to write their own graffiti.

If, as William Faulkner asserts, the creative impulse of the graffitist is very much like that of the creative writer, if his motivation is to leave something of himself to posterity, and if, as Norman Mailer contends, some of the best writing in America is to be found in graffiti, then it behooves us to encourage our students' interest in graffiti. For many students, the study of invention of graffiti may be one of the most powerful means of fostering creativity, self-assertion, and identification. "I write; therefore, I am," as one graffitist put it.

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SHOPTALK:

"It is time that American coaches stopped allowing themselves to be personally represented by male athletic teams and individuals who look like females. It is time that American coaches realized that a male's hair is not just an American tradition but an issue involving biblical principles; time that coaches stopped rationalizing and compromising their common sense; time to show the American athlete that his most valuable characteristic is not physical ability but respect for authority.

Why do many coaches rationalize and compromise their norms and standards of good grooming habits and allow themselves to be personally represented by males that look like females? If a coach has good grooming habits and looks like a male, only rationalization and compromise would permit him to be represented by anything resembling sloppiness and abnormality.

It should be pointed out here that the only reason males are free to look like females and that their coaches are free to permit this is because we have had real men, who were not cute, not sweet and not pretty, with courage and sense enough to kill our enemies on battlefields all over the globe. What will our present-day cute, sweet and pretty boys do when it comes their turn to fight in battle as every generation of Americans has had to do? Maybe they will die the sin unto death like King Saul for failure to kill the enemy. If the coaches of America would grow long hair like their athletes, we might be able to scare the Russian and Chinese Communists to death with our lack of masculinity.

A male with long hair is a sign of rejection of authority--his own authority over himself as well as the authority of the laws of establishment. Under the laws of establishment, God designed the male to dominate the woman and to initiate the woman (1 Cor. 11:3). . .

Before a man can have authority over his right woman, he must first have authority over himself. We have a generation of kids who have no authority over themselves. This means no self-discipline, which is the worst thing that can happen to an individual not only in athletics but with regard to life in general.

Long hair on a male is abnormal and means:

a. He has rejected authority over himself and over his own woman.
b. He has the soul of a woman as indicated by:
    1. His free will dictating to him that he must look like a woman.
    2. The fact that long hair is a sign of submission. (Women's souls were not designed to lead or to fight but to submit to their right man.(1 Cor. 11:3 and 7-9).
c. A nation of males with long hair is a nation of men with women's souls looking for someone or something to submit to. Therefore, every time you look at a male with long hair you're looking at a potential slave.
d. Long hair on a male is not just a fad that will pass but a sign or rejection of authority. Rejection of authority destroys individuals, teams and nations. One generation of authority-rejecting males makes a nation ripe for destruction and slavery. As written in Hosea 4:1 and 5-6: . . ."

(Tony Simpson, "Real Men, Short Hair," INTELLECTUAL DIGEST, Nov. 1973, pp. 76, 78: originally printed in TEXAS COACH)

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COMIC SUPER-HEROES: NEW AMERICAN MYTHOLOGY

Nel Ward, West High School, Phoenix

COMIC CODE EMBLEM

"Comic books are trash!" This comment is frequently used by dedicated teachers to confront any comic book advocate. "My parents never let me read those things!" and they finish their condemnation. Of course, some comics are garbage. So are many novels, poems, short stories, films, television programs, magazine articles, and any other literary genres which might be found in the classroom. Not all comics can be condemned, however, because some of them display less than literary genius; the better ones have value frequently both from the literary and artistic points of view. Comic books of today have developed a line of thoroughly believable, totally human characters who have many of the same problems that the students have.

"Well, if they aren't trash, they are certainly nothing but pictures and one or two words per page, all mono-syllabic." Oh, really? A Marvel comic recounting the exciting adventures of such super-heroes as Spider-Man, the Fantastic Four, or The Incredible Hulk, will average over 3,000 words per thirty-two-page episode--without considering the editorials, news items, readers' letters with editorial answers, and those fantastic advertisements--a length quite respectable for any short story without pictures. And paucity of words doesn't necessarily mean lack of quality. Consider what few words are in poems. Might we consider quality rather than quantity?

"Quality!" you scream. "Look at the low reading level." The Incredible Hulk quotes Shakespeare, the Silver Surfer spouts a deep, if bitter, philosophy, and Spider-Man ponders on man's need for mythological heroes. "O.K., I might use comic books as a break after the students have worked hard." Unfortunately, many of us indicate that hard work and fun are two entirely different concepts and can never be associated with the same activity. Comics can be used for learning, and students will work hard on them without realizing they are working. (Although maybe teaching a kid without making him miserable at the same time might be a dirty trick. We could ruin his whole philosophy of education.) A teacher and a student should begin education with the student's world of experience. If this includes comic books, then they can be used to lead him in a variety of directions. The one valid argument that teachers might use against comic books in the classroom is their ignorance of the genre. Many present-day teachers gave up reading comic books in their early teens and have had no exposure to them since then. In the past ten years the comic books have undergone a considerable change. So if your <u>real</u> reason for not using comics is this lack of knowledge, start reading them. Ask students about them and find out where they really live.

Comics rarely appear in the school system (except when snuck in); they are a phenomenon almost entirely associated with pure enjoyment and total lack of learning. I propose that comic books (and I'm not advocating classic comics as a substitute for the super-heroes) be allowed to occupy a place in the school classroom.

If you have not dabbled in comic mania for several years, you may be unaware of the changes that the super-heroes have undergone in their thirty-six years of flying through the colorful frames of comic books. When Superman was born in June of 1938, the country was struggling out of its depression, science had a grip on our interest, and Hitler was not generally considered a threat by Americans. Although comic strips had been around since the early 1900's, only a few abortive attempts

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at comic books had been made. Superman was only one of the stories in ACTION #1, put out by Detective Comics (the reason for D.C. today's comic covers). But he was an instant success. His parents were ordinary folk like our next-door neighbors, people the readers could identify with, and Superman began with modest super-abilities--running fast and leaping far. As America's love for the American Samson-Hercules grew, so did his qualifications, to flying and X-ray vision. Only Krptonite, a mineral from his native planet, could weaken this man. Dressed in primary colors of red, blue, and yellow, Superman became the prototype for the more than 8,000 costumed heroes who followed him. With such a success, what else but Batman, a second giant from the publishing company, this time a human who resolved to catch the bad guys with no more super-ability than his own active brain. Whereas Superman was a science-fiction character who developed a pseudo-human alterego (Clark Kent), Bruce Wayne, a human, used science and technology (and a little superstition) to become the feared Batman. Superman had the strength; Batman, the mystique.

The next few years of super-heroes saw more fantastic creations--an android who could burst into flame, a detective who became the size of a doll, the man who could stretch himself into any shape, etc. Imagination was unleashed for the creation of super-heroes. The Human Torch was inspired by Act, I, scene iii of Shakespeare's JULIUS CAESAR, "all in fire walk/ed/ up and down the streets." And to represent the mythical conflict of fire and water, the Human Torch was pitted against the Sub-Mariner, the first anti-hero of comic books. The Sub-Mariner, supposedly from the mythical sunken city of Atlantis, hated mankind and came to the surface to destroy it; yet irony caused him to usually end up giving a helping hand to those in trouble. Plastic-Man was the surrealistic stretching hero with the ability to re-shape his body in any way that he wished. Nothing was too difficult; he could stretch upward forty stories and sideways ten yards, or fold up into a tiny ball.

SUB-MARINER

Perhaps the best-loved hero of comicdom was Captain Marvel. Born in 1940, the Big Red Cheese (as his archrival, Dr. Sivana, referred to him) entertained readers until 1953. The Captain's delightful sense of humor made him a fore-runner of heroes in the sixties and seventies; he could laugh at himself and he frequently had the same problems that the readers did. Batman and Superman were pretty serious, but Captain Marvel was thoroughly human. His powers, on the other hand, were mythical, evolving from saying SHAZAM (initials of Solomon, Hercules, Atlas, Zeus, Achilles, and Mercury, thereby giving him the powers of those individuals). Therefore by 1940 the costumed hero types were well-defined: Super-humans developed from scientific discoveries; visitors from another planet; humans with magical super-human abilities, and just plain humans with a lot of savvy about survival.

THE HUMAN TORCH

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Because the heroes were so totally invulnerable, the creators tried to make them more human by adding boy side-kicks. Batman fought evil alone briefly before Robin joined him. Then came Superboy and Captain Marvel, Jr. Human Torch found Toro to accompany him in his evil-fighting activities. And so forth. The side-kicks also provided a vehicle for expounding philosophies; the heroes had to "explain" everything to their young friends.

Notice that not much as been said about women? There weren't many. Wonder Woman was created in 1941 to pull in a female reading audience, but she was never given the full super-hero powers that men were. In fact, she had to be bailed out of trouble occasionally by her male counterparts. And during this early period of super-heroes, they developed an attitude toward women that was to last for over two decades, although women later changed their attitudes and images. From Superman's first rejection of Lois Lane down to the present Dare Devil's attempt to make Black Widow submissive, the costumed heroes have regarded the heroines as somewhat inferior beings. Women in the forties, if extremely sexy, were usually on the side of evil and therefore must be vanquished. Heroes stayed pure and chaste no matter how many voluptuous females tried to dissuade them from seeking justice. (So the comics said, anyway!) Costumed heroes repulsed women, and their human counterparts seemed almost impotent in their fear of women. Real masculine strength seems to be exhibited by a lack of need for female companionship.

With World War II came a new crop of super-heroes with much different personalities. Earlier heroes were at least colorful and fun-loving. But with the great menace facing the United States, fighting evil was serious. Captain America burst into our midst, a mythical being to represent the American truth to all men. And then came the imitators, all equally dressed in red, white, and blue. At the same time the blue and white skies were running red with blood wherever the Blackhawks engaged in battle. These twentieth-century knights dressed in black in their shining airplanes. The leader, Blackhawk, put together a group of flyers, who collectively, had all the strengths required of a super-hero. And throughout the war these creatures could use weapons, extreme violence, any form of cruelty that would help Our Side. This period of time is the only era when creators condoned the use of conventional weapons by costumed heroes. Captain Marvel pulled his punches and Batman tried to frighten the Joker and Penguin to death. But in his viciousness Blackhawk epitomized all that we were opposing during the war. He was a hero, however, because he fought for US.

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CAPTAIN AMERICA

The end of the war also terminated the need for super-strength. Heroes gradually began to disappear (no reason for them to stick around), and they failed to return in the fifties to keep the world safe from Them. Superman turned into some sort of idiot who cries from pain when Lois Lane drops a biscuit on his foot. The Golden Age of Comics tarnished from the drop-out of such famous heroes as the Human Torch, the Sub-Mariner, and Captain America. Weird tales of the strange and unusual took over; heroes lost out to vampires. And worst of all psychiatry discovered comic books.

A name almost as famous to comic fans as Captain Marvel is Frederic Wertham, who helped alert the Mothers of America to the frightening menace of Comic Books. This gave women a cause they could fight, and fight they did. By 1954 publishers so feared the Forces of Good against them that they banded together and, to protect themselves, created the Comics Code Authority--individuals within the industry which imposed a list of restrictions upon a comic before it earns the coveted seal of

approval. Without this approval, comics might be denied distribution. These restrictions endured for the next fifteen years before they weakened, seriously affecting the costumed gods. American Mythology was almost lost for the next decade. Terror comics disappeared. Profanity, nudity, and "scenes of excessive horror" were prohibited. The Code asked for less slang and colloquialism and the employment of good grammar. No longer could the police commissioner stumble around so that the hero could rescue him, for this depiction might "create disrespect for established authority," and that was forbidden. "If crime is depicted it shall be as a sordid and unpleasant activity." Holy moley!!! (Above quotations are taken from the Standards of the Comics Code Authority.) Superman and Batman didn't give up, but they were about as exciting as Donald Duck and Mickey Mouse. From BLAM to a slight bigg.

By 1960 D.C. was the only force in creating costumed heroes. The outlook seemed hopeless until--SHAZAM! An artist for Atlas, Stan Lee, began a long string of costumed creatures, some enduring today, with AMAZING ADVENTURES and THE FANTASTIC FOUR. D.C. has always been very certain about heroes and villains: the heroes are the very good creatures who fight the very bad creatures, called villains. Stan Lee made hero diagnosis difficult for the reader. The Hulk may be heroic in one comic and the villain in another. And even if the hero is usually good, frequently the people around him will think him evil, such as Spider-Man. Now the reader had to concern himself with the nature of the super-hero's character as well as his conflicts.

THE HULK

The wide collection of costumed heroes now featured by Stan Lee's company, Marvel Comics, include loosely resurrected heroes such as Human Torch, Sub-Mariner, and Captain America in addition to fantastic new ones. The new Human Torch is human, rather than android as the original was. He finds Sub-Mariner in a flop-house when fire accidentally burns off Sub's whiskers and he regains his memory. And Captain America was discovered frozen in an iceberg at the North Pole and brought back to fight the forces of evil. Stan Lee's new inventions are equally bizarre. An example is The Silver Surfer, who comes from another planet and, naturally, cannot return home. His philosophy is somewhat more bitter than D.C. heroes: "Each day I spend upon your savage sphere teaches me one burning truth. . . Man does nothing unless it serves his own selfish ends!" Another of Lee's super-heroes, The Incredible Hulk, is an ugly green thing created by a scientific potion. And The Thing, chunky and orange, with a skin texture like flower-pot fragments pasted on a bulky body.

THE HUMAN TORCH

THE SILVER SURFER

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A look at Spider-Man, my favorite current super-hero, might show the contrast between today's winged wonders and the earlier ones. He needs no youthful side-kick to give him human qualities because he was high-school age when the series began fourteen years ago. Then he had the usual problems of his high-school readers, for example getting enough money for bus fare. Many of his difficulties have evolved around his concern for his chronically ill Aunt May (his guardian) and his inability to get dates with the girls he likes. When he first developed his super-abilities, he tried to use them for making money only to find that he couldn't cash the checks made out to Spider-Man. Then his uncle's violent death changed his philosophy, and he used his powers from that time on to help people. He frequently despairs of his role as super-hero, wishing instead to live a "normal life" without problems of secrecy and isolation. And at times his sense of inadequacy almost overwhelms him. Spidey was the vehicle for successfully chipping away at the strangulation of Ye Olde Comics Code Authority Seals. Although the very mention of drugs was originally forbidden, Spider-Man points out in the May, 1971 issue the dangers of hard drugs. In so doing he lost his seal of approval, "an error," the president of Comic Magazine Association explained later. And the Code policy was changed, so that the use of drugs can be mentioned if they are depicted as a menace. And slowly the code allows more liberal dress codes and greater humanizing of both criminals and police officials.

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SPIDERMAN

Comics, as shown by this brief history, reflect changing values--societal concerns and directions. During the last ten years, comic books have increased the number of minority groups depicted: blacks, for example, have an increasing variety of positions in the lives of super-heroes including the Falcon, Captain America's side-kick who lives in Harlem. One of Marvel's more recent heroes is Luke Cage, a black who was unjustly sent to prison. When he escapes, after a massive dosage of a chemical, he fights evil as epitomized by the dope-pusher who murdered his girlfriend. When the women's liberation movement became well-known, the super-heroines got together one night to rebel against the male chauvinist super-heroes. And Lois Lane combined female and black rights when, in a dream sequence in the Superman comic, she changed into a black woman. Then instead of whining about her ever-present devotion for the big hero, she tells him that if he wants her, he will have to take her the way she is. The Nixon administration has been featured, not too favorably, in several issues of Superman. Politics, racism, sexism, prison reform--these are a few of the issues that have been dealt with in comic books during the past five years.

LUKE CAGE

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Literary themes currently dealt with in the English classroom are also featured in comic books. One such theme is alienation, both physical and emotional. Because of his unusual powers, Superman occasionally mourns his solitude and loneliness. Ben Grimm (The Thing) is extremely disturbed by his enforced super-powers and keeps trying to return to normal, so that he can establish an average family life. Super-heroes should be happy (so readers might believe), but Sub-Mariner (even more bitter than The Silver Surfer) has a battle with the human race because his mother was destroyed by a human. Captain America rejects his super-hero identity temporarily because he feels he is no longer needed. These feelings of alienation create a bond between the teen-age readers and the heroes, characters who can be easily identified with, therefore leading to studies of alienation in other literary forms.

THE THING

Studies in basic symbolism can be investigated with examination of chest symbols and costumes. Also of interest are the paraphernalia that the super-heroes carry and what each article represents. A ring, for example, is the symbol of eternal life because it is unending. After these are explored, then symbols used in stereotyping might bear investigation. Peter Parker's boss, a rather unpleasant character, smokes a rather unpleasant cigar. The alter-ego's vocation also indicates what the person is like; news reporter and scientist are probably the most commonly found in comic super-heroes. A discussion of how these positions fit into the format of the comic book and the format of life shows the symbolism of occupations. Also symbolic is the increasing number of high-school age super-heroes.

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Comic books can be valuable in both drama and film study. In fact, some comics are already set up according to acts and scenes. Students can enact these dramas with pure enjoyment, particularly when the characters are high-school age. And the drawings are designed for studying visual concepts found in films--angles, composition, editing, etc. Storyboards look much like comic books. By looking at comics, students can study concepts of different shots and their organization.

With a study of the origins, alter-egos, costumes, abilities, and paraphernalia of the super-heroes, students can try for an understanding of their personalities. And discussing their problems and situations can lead to in-depth analysis of these characters. As an added bonus, the comics include advertisings, editorial remarks, and responses from the readers which can involve students in a realization of what other comic book enthusiasts are like. Other activities which would involve the students are collages, dioramas, slide-tapes, games, and the creation of new super-heroes that students can describe and draw, thereby stretching their writing abilities.

THE THING

Using comics in the classroom takes a lot of intestinal fortitude and convictions that you should be employing with these teaching materials. My own personal comic mania has brought me hysterical laughs of ridicule from some and gentle, condescending pats on the head from my more friendly associates. But if you really want to find out whether comic books can be effective in the classroom, take them to the kids to read. Where do you get all these comics? Students are glad to bring them to you for extra credit, recognition, etc. Or if you want to buy some back issues of your own, two good sources are Al's Book Store in Phoenix and Ed Kalb's store at 736 N. Country Club in Mesa (phone 964-1224). So some day when all else fails, try Spider-Man and Captain America on your kids--any age group will do. They can learn a lot and enjoy the process.

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Many of these books can be obtained at the Little Professor book store in Mesa.

Many thanks to Mike Fain for his artistic consultation (roughly translated, great tracing ability).

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ROCK POETRY: BRINGIN' HOME THE KIDS' BACON

Michael Elliott, Mesa High School

"Turn down that (expletive deleted) noise," yells Mom.

"It ain't noise," Junior retorts. And the war is on. Cajole, wheedle, finagle as she might, Mom can't seem to wean Junior away from his music. In fact, his preoccupation seems to grow the more he listens. He and his peers will spend in 1975 considerably more than the two billion dollars plus they spent last year on records, not to mention a minimum of $150 million dollars on rock concerts, and enough money on stereophonic and quad equipment to fund NASA. Sorry, Mom. Rock is here to stay.

But what, you ask, does this musical fanaticism have to do with teaching English? I think the same question was on my former department chairman's mind when he jokingly referred to my mini-course as "Contemporary Music as Noise," temporarily forgetting that its actual title was "Contemporary Music Lyrics as Poetry." Nevertheless, rock music lyrics had everything to do with the success of that particular unit and have paid off dividends when I have exploited them in an effort to get students to respond to poetic language.

Prior to making a case for its classroom value, I have to confess that rock (formerly "rock 'n' roll") has produced its share of pablum and nonsense in its lyrical content: "yummy, yummy, yummy/I've got love in my tummy;" "It was only puppy love;" "Please, Mr. Postman. . .," etc. And who could forget that classic ramble into the inane: "To know, know, know him/ Is to love, love, love him./ Just to see him smile/ Makes my life worthwhile," Because rock aims at a mass audience and is, at its core, a profit-motivated endeavor, we can always expect a certain amount of mindless trash to come out of it. In this it is like the film industry which normally produces ten AIRPORT's for every MAN FOR ALL SEASONS. Yet the teacher wishing to tap the enormous reservoir of student interest in rock would do well to become familiar with the best examples of rock writers and their works.

When confronted with the idea of viewing rock lyrics as poetry, many teachers and critics feel it necessary to engage in furious debate over whether or not rock lyrics, meant only to accompany music, ought to be designated "poetry" at all--whether or not its form, intent, and audience prohibit the rock song's entrance into literary respectability. Actually, when we speak of teaching poetry <u>through</u> rock lyrics, the argument becomes moot. Rock lyrics, whether they can be specifically labeled as poetry or not, represent an extremely rich form of contemporary language play, using every conceivable poetic device and technique. Consider, for example, figures of speech found in rock lyrics. Neil Young's tragic anti-hard drug song "The Needle and the Damage Done" ends with a devastating simile: "But every junkie's like a setting sun." Confronted with this example, my students were able to comprehand how the writer's mind and emotions work together in creating a poetic experience through well-chosen words. The simile allows the reader to realize for himself that every addict's life is on the wane, no matter what his actual age. The message is conveyed, not be abstract sermonizing or statistics, but by comparing two hitherto unconnected things (junkie and sun) to create a new intellectual and emotional understanding in the reader. Equally effective is a metaphor used by THE ASSOCIATION in the song "Requiem for the Masses." A bullfighter, symbolizing a soldier, is killed in the fing by a bull (war). We are told that black is the color of the newsprint he was mentioned in, but that he died under "bloodshot skies," this image providing a stark contrast to the requiem black mentioned throughout the song. Students will easily recognize that the comparison between the skies and bloodshot eyes is an implied one--i.e. a metaphor. The importance of diction to the poet may also be illustrated by pointing out the rich connotations of the words "blood" and "shot" when applied to the context of war, which is the underlying theme of the song.

Personification also appears frequently in rock materials. For instance, viewers of the TV film GO ASK ALICE may recall the title song "White Rabbit" with its reference to "logic and proportion" having "fallen sloppy dead." Paul Simon uses this technique in the grim but poignant opening lines of "The Sounds of Silence," the theme from the film THE GRADUATE: "Hello, darkness, my old friend/I've come to talk with you again."

In addition to figures of speech, I have found no better source of examples than rock lyrics to illustrate for students what is meant by symbolism and compression of language in poetry. Neil Young's hard rock lament "Southern Man," for example, combines both elements in the lines:"I saw cotton and I saw black,/Tall white mansions and little shacks. In discussing this song, my students themselves pointed out how the linking of the words "cotton" and "black" conjures up in the reader's mind a vision of a brutal social system, the plantations of the old South, wherein the black slave and the economic staple, cotton, were practically synonymous. This is compression of language at its best; the poet getting maximum mileage out of his words. Similarly, my students immediately recognized the symbols, "Tall white mansions and little shacks," concrete objects that tell a story beyond themselves. In this fashion, the writer is able to both depict and attack economic injustices eating away at the root of the American Dream.

To use rock only for illustrating definitions of literary terms, however, is to neglect its great potential in teaching theme, for it has poked its nose into nearly every area of human concern. It has examined perennial themes that the poets of the past have wrestled with since Homer. Everything from war to religion, love to alienation has been confronted in one form or another in rock songs. On the social protest side, war is analyzed and scored in such songs as Barry Maguire's "Eve of Destruction," Joan Baez's "Saigon Bride." Country Joe MacDonald's "Vietnam Song," "Golden Ribbons" by Jim Messina, and Bob Dylan's remarkable "With God on Our Side." Drugs are celebrated, studied, or cursed in a variety of songs. Among them: Dylan's "Mr. Tambourine Man;" James Taylor's "Fire and Rain;" Neil Young's "Needle and the Damage Done;" and STEPPENWOLF's "God Damn the Pusher Man." Race prejudice and exploitation form the theme of Elton John's ballad "Indian Sunset," Dylan's "Oxford Town," and Randy Newman's "Sail Away." The abuse of nature and the environment is treated in such songs as Cat Stevens' "Where Do the Children Play?", John Denver's "Rocky Mountain High," Joni Mitchell's "Big Yellow Taxi," and Stephen Stills' "Ecology Song."

Protest, of course, is not the only interest of rock. The rock writers have not failed to confront the problem of trying to express and interpret human experience from the point of view of the individual person. Accordingly, love--the most abused theme in Top 40 style rock--gets considerably more honest treatment at the hands of the better rock writers than it ever did from Tin Pan Alley tune spinners. Dylan's "Just Like a Woman" combines an awareness of the finitude of life and relationships with tender passion for a woman. In "For Emily, Wherever I May Find Her," Paul Simon uses delicate imagery to convey the lover's inner yearnings. The bittersweet aspects of love and the pain involved in relationships gone bad are not neglected by serious rock lyricists. Dylan's acerbic "Like a Rolling Stone" and "Sad-Eyed Lady of the Lowland" use a rambling stream-of-consciousness technique to express the writer's indignation toward women that he claims have hurt him. The theme of the soured marriage is explored with considerable sensitivity in Carly Simon and Jacob Brackman's "That's the Way I've Always Heard It Should Be." Students will also react to the bitterness underlying Carly Simon's popular "You're So Vain," a song which assaults head-on the shallowness of "jet set" values and patented egomania. Alienation and loneliness figure into the rock scene in classics like Paul Simon's powerful "America," a study of a forlorn couple in search of their country. Simon has also given us "Poem on the Underground Wall" and "The Dangling Conversation,"

explorations of the alienation theme amazing in the skillful use of imagery they display. Randy Newman's "I Think It's Gonna Rain Today" also explores human emotion in the face of isolation. In its simplicity and use of direct statement, it might be contrasted to the Beatles' epic song "A Day in the Life," which takes a surrealistic approach in expressing the blend of pathos and absurdity felt about a man who "blew his mind out in a car."

Numerous rock critics have argued, and I think rightly, that the best rock music constitutes a kind of "poetry of the streets." This is true insofar as these composers are writing for a broader audience than other poets, published or otherwise. Producing drivel as well as poetry, they are spokesmen for a generation. The English teacher ignores them at his or her peril. "That's all well and good, but where do I get lyrics that may never find their way into McGraw-Hill texts?" you ask. Well, for a starter, try record jackets (liners). Most albums being released now print the lyrics for the convenience of the interested listener. Albums such as Elton John's BEYOND THE YELLOW BRICK ROAD and AQUALUNG by the Jethro Tull group are veritable anthologies, though you'll have to be discreet in your use of these materials due to the adult subject matter of some of the songs. You won't have to buy them, believe me. Just ask your classes and you'll probably have them the next day. School libraries are also beginning to stock fairly extensive rock and popular collections. In addition to record liners, you might consider the large number of excellent paperback books containing rock lyrics and commentary. One of the best, Richard Goldstein's THE POETRY OF ROCK, has been an excellent source of material since its publication in 1969. David Morse's GRANDFATHER ROCK also offers some excellent, if occasionally esoteric, perspectives. Rock music histories and critical studies in book form are also available to the teacher who wishes to gain background knowledge of the field, though this is not necessary for teaching rock lyrics, no more than it is necessary to know Eliot's biographical history to teach "Prufrock."

In preparing to use rock materials, be sure to go beyond the Top 40 AM popular selections, which are about 95% crap. Listen to whole albums, not just the featured selection which invariably appears. You may be amazed at what you find. Locate a good underground FM station specializing in rock and listen periodically to the new and "classic" selections played. This may be the only time and place you will hear many fine cuts on the radio. These stations are generally very good about identifying the performers and composers who have created the songs they play, as well as the albums from which these tracks are taken. As much as possible, bring the music into the classroom, too. The kids will resent it if you always divorce music and lyrics. Music and words are mutually reinforcing in the best songs, so via record player and taping systems available to you, get the music into the classroom. In my bibliography at the end of this article, I cite an excellent discussion of the realities and problems of using rock in the classroom by David and Delores Linton, and highly recommend it to the teacher interested in using rock music for the first time.

In some cases, of course, due to the often eccentric style of many rock performers and groups, you may have some trouble understanding the words they sing. In this case, no need to despair, but you'll need to be extra persistent. That squawking and screeching may conceal some of the strongest lyrics going. Check the record liner or get the name of the song and pursue it at your local music store by referring to published music sheets. Get your students to help you; they generally will be more eager to hunt up these materials than they have ever been to dig out a symbol in the required Emily Dickinson poem in their anthologies. The search may result in nothing at all or you may add a brilliant poem to your rock stock-in-trade. At any rate, investigate rock. There are enough gems buried in its shaggy, undisciplined landscape to make a thorough search worthwhile. Like it or not, many of your students are already at the mines.

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SHOPTALK:

"'You can do anything,' my father used to say when I was a child and throughout my girlhood. 'You can be anything you want to be.' The outer world set limits, but he did not. The outer world said 'dolls, marriage, babies, cooking, dolls.' He said, 'Keep dreaming.' And so I dreamed all my youth of being many things and people, from d'Artagnan to Joan of Arc, from Guinevere to Theseus, from Pavlova to Leonardo, from Scott to Keats. There was no ceiling to imagination, no fence to aspiration. I was simply in love, and still am, with the power and glory of man. I see nothing more grotesque in a woman yearning to be an astronomer than a man yearning to be a dancer. We should be free to do both, and to love each other, and to reproduce this love. But we are not. Most of us are molded by our parents and our society, from infancy to conform, not merely to the outlines dictated by our biology, but to a pattern imposed by men, long dead, for their convenience. It is time that men and women were let alone, to be what they want to be and not what society expects of them. Certainly, as a woman I am profoundly weary of the avalanche of advice for what is called our good: of being chivied by churchmen, sociologists, psychiatrists and experts in all fields to accept a clearly defined role for the preservation of the community. Let us by all means love men and marry them, bear children and love them, cook well and like it; but let that not be an end any more than a man's work is an end, but rather parts of an infinitely larger whole which is membership in the human race." (The last paragraph in "Subjectively Yours," from the collection of essays by Marya Mannes, MORE IN ANGER, Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1958, pp. 152-153)

CHOOSING SCIENCE FICTION FOR THE SECONDARY SCHOOL

Sheila Schwartz, State University College, New Paltz, NY

The amount of science fiction published each month is staggering, and its selection poses a problem for both the secondary and the college teacher. Few of the teachers using it today in English courses, elective courses, or on the college level, ever had a course in it themselves, or ever had the opportunity to engage in the kind of peer dialogue which has traditionally helped English teachers to develop a critical framework for literature. How may such a critical framework be developed for this genre which is so different from both past and present mainstream literature?

LEGITIMATE EXPECTATIONS

There are certain expectations which should be no different from those applied to traditional literature. The first of these is the use of the English language. It may be science fiction but it still must be written in standard English.

Pauline Kael in her review of one science fiction film, ZARDOZ, wrote that "people never know how to talk in made-up worlds, and they usually sound abjectly prosaic. . . It's like watching a dubbed Italian spectacle on TV: it's all tinged with boredom." (Pauline Kael, "The Current Cinema," THE NEW YORKER, February 18, 1974, p. 98) This same problem runs through much of science fiction.

To illustrate, the opening story in Donald Wollheim's THE 1973 ANNUAL WORLD'S BEST SF, is by a renowned science fiction writer, Poul Anderson. Wollheim describes it as among the most brilliant ever produced by Anderson. But the usage disturbs me (underlining mine):

> On a hill above that valley through which runs the highroad, I await Her passage. Frost came early this year, and the grasses have paled. Otherwise the slope is begrown with blackberry bushes that have been harvested by men and birds, leaving only briars, and with certain apple trees. They are very old, those trees, survivors of an orchard raised by generations which none but SUM now remembers (I can see a few fragments of wall thrusting above the brambles)--scattered crazily over the hillside and as crazily gnarled. A little fruit remains on them. Chill across my skin, a gust shakes loose an apple. I hear it knock on the earth, another stroke of some eternal clock. The shrubs whisper to the wind.
>
> Elsewhere the ridges around me are wooded, afire with scarlets, brasses, bronzes. The sky is huge, the westering sun wan-bright. . ." (Poul Anderson, "Goat Song," in THE 1973 ANNUAL WORLD'S BEST SF, Donald Wollheim, ed. NY: DAW Publications, 1973, pp. 1-2)

Lest you think that the above are exceptions, look at the following ones:

> Precisely what hashed up in the work of the major industrial lessee of the Bonneville Particle Acceleration Facility in Idaho was never known. (James Tiptree Jr., "The Man Who Walked Home," THE 1973 ANNUAL WORLD'S BEST SF, p. 40)

> The rigid wind hissed around Skunder's helmet as he stood, shivering despite the protection of thick fur, on the blinding Cantek ice cap." (Michael G. Coney, "Oh, Valinda!" THE 1973 ANNUAL WORLD'S BEST SF, p. 57)

And perhaps someone can explain the sentence structure of the following to me:

> In Africa the clouds never cross the sun. Clouds countable changing, racing, dispersing and gathering fill the skies of Africa and yet they never veil the sun. That I read once and believe and the idea attracts

me violently. Perpetual sun. Cosmic cosmetic glamorizing protective layer on my gravish hide, sunglasses and bright lipstick, beautiful at a glance. (Josephine Saxton, "Heads Africa Tails America," ORBIT 9, Damon Knight ed., NY: Putnam, 1971, p. 9)

The best science fiction writers, Stapeldon, Vonnegut, Wells, Verne, Huxley, Orwell, write correct English. That is one of the reasons that their works are the best. The poor style illustrated with the above excerpts interferes with reader comprehension of ideas. Note how different are excerpts such as the following ones: BRAVE NEW WORLD, for example begins:

A squat grey building of only thirty-four stories. Over the main entrance the words, CENTRAL LONDON HATCHERY AND CONDITIONING CENTRE, and, in a shield, the World State's motto, COMMUNITY, IDENTITY, STABILITY.

Arthur C. Clarke begins his fine new novel with the same clear, concise, good writing.

Sooner or later, it was bound to happen. On June 30, 1908, Moscow escaped destruction by three hours and four thousand kilometers--a margin invisibly small by the standards of the universe. (Arthur C. Clarke, RENDEZVOUS WITH RAMA, NY: Ballantine, 1973, p. 1)

Teachers can feel comfortable with science fiction that is written as well as the above samples. The language is familiar, the language patterns are familiar, and the excellence of the style makes the ideas accessible to a class for discussion and investigation.

A second legitimate expectation of the teacher is that he can establish a definition of science fiction for himself which will help him to delimit the field in order to make it teachable for himself.

The definition of science fiction which I use is the following one:

Science fiction is fiction which deals mainly with the results of actual or imagined scientific advances upon society or individuals.

Other good definitions are the following:

Science fiction is a branch of fantasy identifiable by the fact that it eases the 'willing suspension of disbelief' on the part of its readers by utilizing an atmosphere of scientific credibility for its imaginative speculations in physical science, space, time, social science, and philosophy. (Sam Moskowitz, EXPLORERS OF THE INFINITE: SHAPERS OF SCIENCE FICTION, NY: World Books, 1957, p. 11)

Science fiction is that branch of literature which deals with a fictitious society differing from our own chiefly in the nature or extent of its technological development. (Isaac Asimov, "Social Science Fiction," MODERN SCIENCE FICTION: ITS MEANING AND ITS FUTURE, Reginald Bretnor, ed., NY: Coward-McCann, 1963, p. 167)

Asimov has also said that science fiction is the study of man's response to technological development.

It is true that a too rigid definition will sometimes lead to the exclusion of a fine book, but this is preferable to the bewilderment which must result from the necessity to chose from a vast torrent of books without any such delimitation.

Part of the necessity for the development of a definition of science fiction is for critical purposes. Science fiction must be criticized in terms of its definition, in terms of what it sets out to be and to do. It must be viewed as "realistic speculation about possible future events, based solidly on adequate knowledge of the real world, past and present, and on a thorough understanding of the nature and significance of the scientific method." (Robert Heinlein, "Science Fiction: Its Nature, Faults and Virtues," THE SCIENCE FICTION NOVEL: IMAGINATION AND SOCIAL CRITICISM, Basil Davenport, ed., 3rd edition, Chicago: Advent Press, 1969, p. 22)

After these two legitimate expectations, (for an acceptable level of usage and for a working definition) are satisfied, teachers and students can begin the development of a critical framework for this genre. The definition is essential, for in light of it new attitudes emerge toward the traditional aspects of science fiction such as plot, character, and setting.

SETTING

There are several new ways of thinking about setting in the science fiction genre. To begin with, setting is never unimportant in a science fiction work. In ROMEO AND JULIET, Verona could be called by any other name which is why the story could be updated to WEST SIDE STORY. But science fiction plots can not exist apart from their settings for they unfold only in relation to the setting.

To illustrate, Arthur C. Clarke's newest work, RENDEZVOUS WITH RAMA, takes place in and around a mysterious UFO, a metallic cylinder more than 30 miles long, twelve across, and weighing about ten trillion tons. The plot is simply described: "The long hoped-for, long-feared encounter had come at last. Mankind was about to receive its first visitor from the stars." (Arthur C. Clarke, RENDEZVOUS WITH RAMA, NY: Ballantine, 1974, p. 12) So important is it for the reader to understand the setting that even the paperback book contains an illustration of Rama, to help orient the reader to this unusual setting.

Another interesting fact about setting in science fiction works is that often the most remote setting can be understood only in relation to how things really are on earth.

Ursula LeGuin's THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS, is set on a remote planet, called Winter, where everyone is bi-sexual. In order to comprehend the author's purpose in hypothesizing this setting, the reader must be familiar with the differences in his own world. It is reader knowledge of the real vs. the imagined, which gives works with settings such as Miss LeGuin's, their tension, irony, and social significance. It is this very fact that enables utopian and dystopian literature to make its impact. The reader constantly balances his own setting with that in the literary work.

Joanna Russ has described this phenomenon in the following way:

> In science fiction the frame is sometimes in evidence but more often not. A reader judges the science-fictionalness of what happens by what he himself knows of the actual world: that is, the reader carries his frame with him. What, in naturalism, would be the frame--the most 'real,' part of the story (future histories, quotations from encyclopedias, newspaper reports, and so on)--becomes the most bizarre and the least believable. (Joanna Russ, "The Subjunctivity of Science Fiction," in EXTRAPOLATION, December 1973, p. 56)

The reader must know or acquire some information about the real world in order to react to the possible world or setting hypothesized by the author.

A different type of science fiction work requires still another readjustment to setting. In many works, settings have no relation at all to this world and in that case readers must not only suspend disbelief as they would in fairy tales, they must actually put aside what they do know. Readers know that it doesn't rain for seven years on Venus as Bradbury described it in "All Summer in a Day," but they accept this setting because the poignance of the story depends on the fact that the sun appears only for a short period at the end of each seven years. The reader says, "yes, this setting is impossible, given all of the factual knowledge I have, but I

will pretend that it is not impossible because without this acceptance the story cannot survive."

In one of 1973's most interesting science fiction novels, FRANKENSTEIN UNBOUND, Brian W. Aldiss, through the device of a Timeslip, sends his protagonist, Joe Bodenland, back in time to the year 1816, where he enters into the worlds of both Frankenstein and of his creator, Mary Shelley. If these facts of time and setting are not accepted, the novel can have no value or meaning for the reader.

Of course, the point is that in this second kind of work, generally called "social science fiction" the setting is unimportant. It is just a device, constructed to point up the errors and flaws in our own world. Scientific accuracy has nothing to do with this second kind of setting; it has everything to do with the first kind of work epitomized by RENDEZVOUS WITH RAMA.

A still different set of adjustments to setting must occur when the science fiction work is set on earth. Here, the reader must extrapolate, but he can do so only if he is familiar with the existing setting which is being extrapolated. "Advertising controls much of our thinking," the reader may say, and therefore he can enjoy the extrapolation in Pohl and Kornbluth's THE SPACE MERCHANTS, in which advertising agencies sell unusuable land on Venus.

The possibility of nuclear holocaust is essential for the understanding of works such as ON THE BEACH and A CANTICLE FOR LEIBOWITZ: an understanding of the existence of neurosurgery is essential for the understanding of works such as TERMINAL MAN and the possibility of genetic engineering must be understood to appreciate a work such as BUG JACK BARRON.

To summarize, the place of setting in science fiction is the following: setting is never unimportant in a science fiction work, often the setting is the plot. Sometimes the reader must put aside what he knows to be scientifically true about a particular setting, in order to enjoy the story. Settings both on earth and on other planets are often extrapolations of those on earth and therefore an understanding of such a setting on earth is necessary to understand the extrapolated setting. In one case, factual knowledge is essential, in the other case, it must be discarded.

PLOT

Plot, too, must be viewed differently in the science fiction genre. To Arthur C. Clarke has been attributed the remark that in science fiction, the plot is the character. It is true that, in general, characterization is less important than is plot because the plots are so overwhelming and inescapable. Holocaust, pollution, overpopulation, and thought control happen to the masses and it is precisely because they happen to the masses that they are science fiction.

In mainstream literature, plot is inextricably involved with character. In science fiction, plot is often unrelated to character and the nature of the individual character is irrelevant to occurrences such as fallout, pollution, and overpopulation.

In mainstream literature the plot usually revolves around and through one or more individuals. The tension in mainstream literature occurs because of the actions of one individual (i.e. MADAME BOVARY or ANNA KARENINA) who deviates or dares more than do the masses surrounding her.

Science fiction can only be said to belong to this genre if it happens to more than one person, only if it happens to the masses. Fallout cannot happen to only one person. Mass plot, mass events, mass consequences, these are the essential as-

pects of science fiction plots.

If one stream is polluted it is not science fiction. If all of the waters in the world have been polluted with pink algae, we then have David Walker's work THE LORD'S PINK OCEAN. (DAW) If one woman is sterile, this is individual tragedy. When all of the women of Great Britain have been made sterile by a drug from behind the Iron Curtain, this makes for T.F. Jones' IMPLOSION.

The first characteristic of science fiction plot is its mass nature. A second characteristic is its foundation in extrapolation. Extrapolation is rarely a device of mainstream literature. It is the basic technique of science fiction. Extrapolation leads to another characteristic, that of technological possibility. This means that:

> the possibilities that are considered most important or, at least, most worthy of attention are those that can be plausibly regarded as future developments of existing engineering techniques, the creation of a new technology similar to present technologies, or the application of accepted scientific generalizations to new and unfamiliar cases. Most so-called 'hard' science fiction satisfies this description and achieves its results by working within this self-imposed limitation. (Ronald Munson, "SF: The Literature of Possibility," EXTRAPOLATION, December 1973, p. 36)

The best science fiction works are extrapolated from present possibility. THE DAY OF THE DOLPHIN extrapolates both contemporary dolphin research and man's tendency to misuse new inventions for sinister purposes, BUG JACK BARRON extrapolates the possibilities of media control of society.

An outstanding example of technological possibility is John Brunner's THE SHEEP LOOK UP. Brunner's writing is so good that it seems a shame to relegate his work to the science fiction ghetto. It is certainly as good as most mainstream literature.

The setting of THE SHEEP LOOK UP, is the United States at a time not too far in the future. The Earth has become so polluted that life is almost not worth the effort. Signs of the times include "The Beach Not Safe for Swimming," "NOT Drinking Water" and "UNFIT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION." The Mediterranean is stagnant and dead and the water supply for the Rocky Mountain area has been polluted with poisonous gas. (This is vaguely reminiscent of George C. Scott's film RAGE, which dealt with the affects of nerve gas on a western area near Denver, where much of Brunner's book unfolds).

The crisis in the Brunner book is precipitated by a synthetic food, "Bamberley's Nutripon," which has been sent to underdeveloped countries where it causes epidemics of madness and then, death. To see the relationship of this to "possibility," one need only look at an article in THE NEW YORK TIMES of January 8, 1974, entitled, "Adulterated Foods Causing Serious Problems in India." The article tells us:

> Lentils that cause paralysis! Used tea leaves collected from garbage dumps and mixed with fresh tea for resale! Soft drinks colored with dyes that produce cancer!
>
> Within the last six months, the problem of adulterated foods--some crippling and even fatal--has gripped the attention of Indians, in such urban centers as New Delhi, Bombay and Calcutta.
>
> It has led to angry allegations in the press, an increasingly mobilized consumer movement, accusations about government laxity on the state and national levels, and considerable anxiety in the legislatures.
>
> Attracting Interest
>
> Prime Minister Indira Gandhi has termed adulteration a 'serious problem' and urged that guilty traders and merchants should have their names displayed in

market and railway stations. She said the Government-controlled radio and television should speed up the campaign against adulterators. . .

Ironically, in a country where it is commonplace for many to become sick for lack of food, many are now suffering because of it. . .

While Americans may think of food adulteration in terms of preservatives, sweetening additives or excessive fat in processed meats, the average Indian confronts it in almost all of the food he buys--from flour and rice to spices and cooking oil--and even in the kerosene he needs to make a cooking fire. . .

Predictably, it is the necessities of Indian life--the food grains and spices--that are most vulnerable to adulteration. Stones actually cut into the shape of rice have been found in rice rations. Spices have been polished with inedible dyes to make them more attractive to the buying public. Milk, almost traditionally adulterated with water, is said to have been mixed with starch . . . (p. 28c)

In addition, the article reports that lipsticks are sold which contain arsenic, and "a vermillion-color cosmetic, worn by married women, contains lead, saffron and tumeric polished with metanil yellow (a lead chromate) . . ."

Here we have seen the demonstration of the technological possibility inherent in Brunner's book.

Robert Heinlein has also related science fiction plot to speculation. This means that the plot asks the question, "What would happen if--?" or says, "Just suppose--." Questions such as these lead to change and new human problems. "In the speculative science fiction story, accepted science and established facts are extrapolated to produce a new situation, a new framework for human action. As a result of this new situation, new human problems are created--and our story is about how human beings cope with these new problems." (Robert A. Heinlein, "The Writing of Speculative Fiction," OF WORLDS BEYOND, Lloyd Arthur Eshbach, ed., Chicago, 1964, p. 17)

Heinlein set down the following principles for the science fiction plot:

1. The conditions must be, in some respect, different from here-and-now, although the difference may lie only in an invention made in the course of the story.
2. The new conditions must be an essential part of the story.
3. The problem itself--the 'plot'--must be a human problem.
4. The human problem must be one which is created by, or indispensably affected by, the new conditions.
5. And lastly, no established fact shall be violated, and furthermore, when the story requires that a theory contrary to present accepted theory be used, the new theory should be rendered reasonably plausible and it must include and explain established facts as satisfactorily as the one the author saw fit to junk. (Robert A. Heinlein, "The Writing of Speculative Fiction," OF WORLDS BEYOND, Lloyd Arthur Eshbach, ed., Chicago, 1964, p. 17)

CHARACTERIZATION

In the best science fiction works, characterization is secondary to plot. Winston Smith and Julia in 1984 pale beside Big Brother and the general horrors of life in that era. The Noble Savage and Lenina are forgotten while we remember the feelies and genetic engineering of BRAVE NEW WORLD. It is difficult to remember an individual character in THE SHEEP LOOK UP, but the plot and setting are unforgettable.

Nevertheless, for science fiction to have the greatest impact the plot must occur to recognizable human beings. In mainstream literature, plot and character are inseparable. In science fiction, plot and character are either unrelated or are

parallel. In mainstream literature, characters affect the plot. In science fiction, plot occurs regardless of individual efforts. Character is also made less important by the fact that the plots must happen to the masses. In THE DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS, we remember the fact of the total blinding of the population, more than the protagonist. In LEVEL 7, the underground world, the plot and the setting are what stay with us.

This is not to indicate that there is some characterization which is better than others. In Robert Merle's THE DAY OF THE DOLPHINS, although the protagonist must take second place to the dolphins, he is an interesting and complex man, supposedly based on John Lilly, the dolphin research scientist. He is a successful scientist, a success on the lecture circuit, and a success with women. A witty, perceptive, and intelligent man, we see him grow throughout the book to become a person of deep integrity who is capable of love, honor and sacrifice. It is because his character, as the best kind of responsible scientist, is so well-drawn, that we see so clearly the possibilities for evil in scientists who lack his humanistic philosophy.

Other memorable science fiction characters who have more than the usual dimension are Valentine Michael Smith and Jubal Harnshaw in STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND, Jack Barron in BUG JACK BARRON, and Harlie, a computer in David Gerrold's WHEN HARLIE WAS ONE (Ballantine, 1972).

Harlie (Human Analogue Robot, Life Input Equivalents) reminds us of HAL, the computer in Arthur C. Clarke's 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY, for both seem more human than do the people in the works. Harlie is also a lot smarter than the human beings and the reader finds himself caring about whether or not this computer will be unplugged by the villains in the book. One of the delightful things about Harlie is his sense of humor. Here he is in interaction with Aubuson, the research scientist assigned to work with him.

HARLIE, HOW MUCH IS TWO AND TWO?
TWO AND TWO WHAT?
TWO AND TWO PERIOD.
TWO PERIODS AND TWO PERIODS IS FOUR PERIODS. . . .
NO PUNS PLEASE.
WHY, WILL YOU PUNISH ME.
I WILL PULL OUT YOUR PLUG WITH MY OWN TWO HANDS.
AGAIN WITH THE THREATS? AGAIN? I WILL TELL DR. HANDLEY ON YOU.
ALL RIGHT--THAT'S ENOUGH HARLIE. WE'RE THROUGH PLAYING.
AWW, CAN'T A FELLOW HAVE ANY FUN?
NO, YOU CAN'T.
HARLIE typed a four-letter word.
WHERE DID YOU LEARN THAT?
I'VE BEEN READING NORMAN MAILER

Even when characters are developed, <u>they usually have little power</u> to change events of the plot. In mainstream literature, "plot and character are inseparable. The plot, the structure of the action, shows particular characters capable of essentially consistent behavior under varying kinds and degrees of pressure. . . Plot and character achieve unity through the values held by the protagonist--the things that seem most important to him and determine the action he takes. . . The plot of a novel is based on <u>conflict</u>, centered in the <u>protagonist</u> and concerned with something he wishes to gain but the attainment of which is uncertain. <u>Forces</u> within himself--conflicting impulses, habits, character traits--and forces without--other persons, environmental factors--aid or hinder him in the pursuit of his goal." (Margaret Ryan, TEACHING THE NOVEL IN PAPERBACK, NY: Macmillan, 1964, pp. 46-48)

In science fiction, <u>individual values are irrelevant to plot, the conflict is centered in society and not in the individual, the emotions within the individual</u>

are irrelevant, free choice and free will do not exist, introspection is a waste of of time, and individual goals are also without significance.

To illustrate, let us look at the novel IMPLOSION by D.F. Jones (Berkeley, 1967). A drug has caused sterility in most British women and the few who have remained fertile are given fertility drugs and placed in camps for Mums, where they are artificially inseminated and reduced to the mindless status of breeders. Free choice, free will does not exist. One is either sterile or a breeder. Marriage and family life then disappear as the state takes all children to sheltered schools to see that every future life is protected. The conflict is not centered in the protagonist, the consistency or inconsistency of a character's behavior is irrelevant, and there is no point in the pursuit of individual goals since all goals must now be subordinated to the salvation of society.

Thus, it is evident that characterization must be viewed quite differently in the science fiction genre, not as inferior writing, but as a different kind of literary strategy devised for different goals.

SUMMARY

As teachers and students begin the development of a theory of science fiction, they can best be helped by seriously considering the differences in this genre: its muted, almost reportorial use of language, the different demands made on the reader for the understanding of setting, the view of plot as technological possibility, and the view of character as affected rather than as achiever or affector. With this base, readers can evaluate the themes, values, and role of science fiction in our society. Louis Kamp has written that "critical methodology has erected a wall between student and literary work. The wall is impenetrable and effectively prevents students from bringing the experience of literature to bear upon their daily lives." (Linda Weissman, ed., Teacher's Manual for the film series, GREAT THEMES OF LITERATURE, NY: Learning Corporation, 1974, p. 8) But the development of a critical theory such as we have described here can help students to "discover what or who they are. . .(and)... . how their joys and pains relate to the world and the culture which. . .(has). . .been forced upon them." (Linda Weissman, ed., GREAT THEMES OF LITERATURE, NY: Learning Corporation, 1974, p. 8)

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SHOPTALK:

The Nielsen rating system may be the most common one used to determine the number of TV viewers for a specific show, but as the following AP dispatch suggests, it is not the only reliable measurement. "The boys at the Lafayette waterworks don't need television to know when it's halftime during the Monday night football game. They say they have a sure-fire method of measuring TV audiences--the bathroom habits of tube addicts.Jim Love, water department superintendent, says a graph gauging water pressure in the city dips during the commercials and plunges at show's end when viewers trek to the toilet. The record drop in water pressure to date, a plunge of 25 pounds per square inch (PSI) of water pressure, came at the end of the TV showing of the movie AIRPORT. The movie PATTON chalked up 22, and THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY checked in with a respectable 19." ("Toilet Trek Rates TV Shows," DENVER POST, July 28, 1974, p. 6)

VIDEO SCREEN SEXISM

Gail Fisher Briscoe, Tempe High School

Unquestionably TV is one of the most far reaching and influential forms of communication in American society. It is well known that children are spending more time in front of the TV than they are spending in school. Figures released by several sources show that for every hour a child spends in the classroom, he is spending up to two hours in front of the TV set.

It is important then for both educators and parents to be aware of the recurring stereotyped TV images of women who have played before millions of young impressionable eyes during the prime time hours of television. For some 25 years, television has done its best to portray women in the stereotyped roles of housewives, secretaries, nurses, teachers, mothers, sex-objects (usually that of the male lead), ex-wives, and the pathetic child/woman who must be taken care of by the strong, virile male lead. Women have usually appeared in television roles that serve as extensions (the classic help-mate) of the men who dominate and rule the video screen universe.

A brief (and admittedly incomplete) history of women in television who had their own shows or shared the spotlight in an "equal" billing, might help to explain why the stereotyped roles for women in TV exist.

Unknowingly, in 1949, "Mama" struck a TV formula that can be seen today in the "Waltons." The mother stereotype, as played by Peggy Wood in "Mama," guided and held the family together through pathos and comedy. A wholesome, entertaining show, but at the same time depicting a woman's place as in the home with her family.

A different female stereotype was also projected in 1949 in a kiddie show called "Super Circus." Although a children's show, still thousands of males also tuned in along with their youngsters to watch the golden haired, curvaceous, short-skirted Mary Hartline who led the band. How many little girls were influenced at an early age into believing that Mary, as an adult woman, held the model figure and good looks prescribed to get along in the world (especially with the males)? With fathers watching along with them, how many little girls received the unspoken communication of father's approval for such a female?

Still another female stereotype shows up in the personages of Imogene Coca in "Your Show of Shows" (1950) and Gracie Allen in "Burns and Allen" (1950). These females aren't to be taken seriously; they're a joke both to themselves and to their husbands (Sid Caesar and George Allen) who wisecrack and use them as set-ups for put-downs.

Probably no one has done more (perhaps unconsciously) to thwart the development of a realistic image of women on TV than Lucille Ball. Beginning in 1951 with "I Love Lucy," she developed and maintained a most unflattering stereotype of the "dumb broad." Gail Rock, writing for MS. in the December 1973 issue, sized up the Lucy image and its devastating results in an article called "Same Time, Same Station, Same Sexism."

> Lucille Ball ("Here's Lucy" on CBS) pretty much wrote the rule book for the standard "dumb broad" format that has dominated the TV image of women. Now in her twenty-third TV season, she is still playing the same character: the bird-brained redhead who gets everyone into ridiculous trouble, draws everyone else in with her, and finally gets out by some equally birdbrained scheme. In the old days the plots hinged on her driving Desi Arnaz crazy with her antics and fearfully waiting for his exploding temper. He would scold

and discipline her like a child, and finally forgive her. Now she drives Gale Gordon crazy.

The Lucille Ball situation comedy model is a zany child-woman who is dumb and innocent and who has to be patronizingly disciplined by the husband/father/boss. (In situation comedies starring women, there is always a dominant male. Women are never independently in charge of their own lives.) This format depends for much of its comedy on the woman manipulating the man: tricking, deceiving, flirting, coddling, finally admitting she's doing wrong and being forgiven. It is, thankfully, going out of style, though remnants of it still persist in even the most updated shows.

It is easy to understand how in 1952 there were two shows featuring female leads who could have easily been Lucy's sisters. "My Little Margie," starring Gale Storm, further developed the helpless, child/woman stereotype who found herself involved in unbelievable slapstick situations. That same year "My Friend Irma" featured Marie Wilson as another 'feather-brained" female.

In "Ozzie and Harriet" (1952) Harriet maintains "her place" exceedingly well. After all, her husband writes and then directs almost all of the scripts, so from his point of view, he knows where he wants her. In a 1956 episode from this series, Harriet's role consisted of doing the grocery shopping (Ozzie carried the shopping bags in from the car), cooking and setting elaborate tables for dinner, sorting and washing the clothes, and sewing on missing buttons. While the title of this show might lead one to believe that Harriet is half of it, Ozzie's part clearly dominates over hers. Harriet's dominant role is in the commercials which were filmed right in with the show. She is the star saleslady for Aund Jemima Pancake Mix.

Other shows during the 1950's and 60's continued to present women in comic rather than serious dramatic roles. Was there some unwritten policy that said if a woman was to have her own show it must be some kind of a joke and not taken seriously? In 1953, Ann Southern kept them laughing in "Private Secretary" as another "ding-dong" blonde in a typical job for women. Senior citizen Spring Byington provoked more sympathetic laughter in "December Bride" (1954). "Donna Reed" (1958) held her family together through such serious problems as whether or not teenage daughter, Shelley Fabares, would get asked to the prom.

In the sixties Barbara Eden is content to let her husband, Larry Hagman, be her master in "I Dream of Jeannie" (1965). Sally Fields as "Gidget" (1965) was a mindless, teenage surf freak. With Marlo Thomas in "That Girl" (1966), there seems to be a hint of change coming. Zany as she is, there are some episodes where she does her own thinking without help from her boyfriend. "The Flying Nun" (1967) is another example of how a serious role for women was made to look silly. Would TV audiences have accepted a flying priest as readily as they did a flying nun? Why is it that television series programming seems to have thrived on placing women in ridiculous situations?

Diahann Carroll as "Julia" in 1968 created a somewhat serious dramatic role as the young widow who was a nurse. Perhaps it was more acceptable for her to have a serious occupation since she was a widow and needed to support her small child. Her occupation, nursing, also suited the stereotyped roles we have for women, and especially that of black women. Would the show have survived if she had been a black bank manager? Probably not. A black female, as the star of her own show, plays it safer with the mass media audiences by sticking to the more acceptable career roles for women.

Mary Tyler Moore must be cited as making a breakthrough when her show first appeared in 1970. Still not a serious dramatic role, but at least the humor evolves

from the people rather than from ridiculous situations. Mary is over 30, unmarried, not especially concerned about finding "the right man" and genuinely seems to enjoy her career. She has a sense of humor and is quite capable of making her own decisions. This kind of female character seems to be a first for TV series programming. And it is notable that this show still receives top Nielsen ratings going into its fifth season. Perhaps audiences are ready for a change.

Of significant historical note in one episode, Mary confronts her boss, Mr. Grant, with the fact that the man who preceded her in the same job was paid $15.00 a week more than she is being paid. Mary wants to know if she is doing as good a job as he did, and Mr. Grant tells Mary she is doing a better job. "Then why do I get paid $15.00 a week less?" asks Mary. "Because you're a woman," replies Grant. In the end Mary receives the same pay as did her predecessor.

"Maude" (1972) is another show where the female lead, Beatrice Arthur, is not afraid to speak up (some have even complained of all the yelling on this series) and assert herself. She is quite capable of making her own decisions and then having to live with them. This show has dealt with serious subject matter (abortion, alcoholism, drugs, etc.) that many situation comedies or dramatic series would probably avoid. But Maude is a gutsy character, not one to avoid the issues.

"Rhoda" (1974) has turned out to be a refreshing sit com with a new (or rather borrowed) character played by Valerie Harper. Rhoda is able to make her own decisions as she deals with the contemporary problems that face many married (and unmarried) young women. Like Mary Tyler Moore and Maude, Rhoda has a sense of intelligence about her. She is not some scatter-brained female trying to work her way out of stupid messes. "Mary Tyler Moore," "Maude," and "Rhoda" have consistently made the top 20 Nielsen ratings.

This season television is also offering three women who star in their own dramatic series; two are a weekly series and the other is seen once every three weeks. Teresa Graves in "Get Christie Love" and Angie Dickinson as Pepper Anderson in "Police Woman" are the only two females this season to have dramatic leads in their own shows during the prime time hours. Jessica Walter as "Amy Prentiss" is seen once every three weeks in her dramatic role as chief of detectives for 260 men in San Francisco. Christie Love and Pepper Anderson both seem to go about their work with a tongue-in-cheek attitude. Christie has to continually prove herself to her boss and to her fellow workers. Pepper usually ends up being bailed out of trouble by her male partner and comes across as the stereotyped sexy bombshell in tight clothes "playing" at being a police woman. By contrast, Amy Prentiss seems to be the most believable female lead in dramatic television. She is just a person working very hard at a job that she enjoys. She is able to make her own decisions and doesn't need a back-up man to bail her out of trouble. She is respected by her workers and doesn't flaunt her sexuality.

"Police Woman" has been successful according to the Nielsen ratings. It has been rated high among the 20 most popular evening television shows, and at least once it has been rated number one. But among police officers themselves, the show has a different standing. For example, THE BLUE LIGHT, a weekly newspaper for Chicago police officers, recently asked its readers which cop shows they watch and enjoy the most. "Police Woman" (along with "Hawaii Five-O") ranked in fifth place. "Get Christie Love" and the "Rookies" got the worst scores of all. Many readers were critical of Christie's clothes and her costly car. They wondered how she could buy such things on a police officer's pay. As dramatic offerings, these shows do not represent enough realism for the people who work in these fields.

Which leads to this thought: Do people want realicy in their entertainment?

It would seem that in the case of "Police Woman" they don't. It would also seem that throughout the history of televisions's treatment of women viewers haven't wanted reality with their lead female characters. Instead, a mass media stereotype has been passed off on the public and they either accepted it or kept their mouths and minds closed about not liking it. But like it or not, millions of impressionable young minds have watched the TV stereotyped image and perhaps grown up with the idea that these females were models to emulate: Lucy, Harriet Nelson, Margie, Donna Reed, Gidget, Jeannie, etc.

Watching a stereotyped role on television is easy and comfortable for the viewer. It's easy because the stereotyped role is already defined and prescribed. It's comfortable because, being defined, we already know what to expect and people are generally comfortable about things they are already familiar with. The stereotyped role of the housewife, secretary, girlfriend, etc., has been played before so we know what to expect. Little or no thinking is required on the part of the viewer.

If women are to gain equal respect and prestige on television (as they are trying to do in other areas), then their roles on the screen will have to be more serious that the tired stereotypes. Clearly television has discriminated against women by only offering these roles. Part of this fault has to lie with uncomplaining viewers and the producers and writers themselves who are generally men. But there are some hopeful signs of changes as evidenced by the leading females who have their own shows this season and by the field of TV writers. For example, 50% of the scripts for the 1973-74 season of "Mary Tyler Moore" were written by women.

But in a report released by the Writers Guild of America in Los Angeles, only 6.5% of the stories and teleplays and only 1.5% of the pilots for new shows during the 1973-74 season were written by women. Contrast that to a 13% female membership in the guild. Shows with the highest percentage of female writers for 1973-74 were "Mary Tyler Moore," "Maude," "Marcus Welby," and "Love American Style." The report also revealed that last season, out of 63 series on television, 36 employed no women writers whatsoever!

The present condition of women's roles in television has resulted from a history of male domination in lead roles and scripting. As professional roles for women become more acceptable and popular in society, these changes will be reflected in the media roles for women; women will have more to say about what roles audiences will see because they will be writing the roles and portraying them on the video screen.

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SHOPTALK:

"Ten years from now, the average family will watch 30 minutes more television every day, and the average person will increase his radio listening by 30 minutes a day, according to a survey of 158 broadcasting experts conducted by the Cox Broadcasting Corporation, an Atlanta-based company.
These electronic increases would be in addition to time spent with video cassettes and pay-television (most likely in the form of pay-cable).
Average TV viewing by households is expected to grow to six hours and 53 minutes a day by 1985. And daily radio listening by individuals is expected to reach three hours and 55 minutes by that year. These gains, the study indicates, would be accompanied by increases in the number of channels and radio stations available to consumers." (Les Brown, "TV Notes," NY TIMES, March 9, 1975, "Arts and Leisure" section, p.31)

MAGAZINES AND THE ENGLISH CLASS

Maia Pank Mertz, Ohio State University

Aside from newspapers, magazines are one of the least expensive and most readily available mass media for students and teachers--especially if students are encouraged to bring their favorite magazines to school for study. Yet, of all the mass media, magazines appear to be the most neglected as far as the English classroom is concerned. Although a variety of "units" are available on teaching newspapers, television, or films, relatively little has been written on the use of magazines in English classes.

This neglect is puzzling because magazines provide a microcosm of cultural artifacts in a packaged format. Magazines' covers, advertising, feature articles, editorials, fiction, photographs, and cartoons provide the opportunity for students to examine how magazines create symbolic "worlds" composed of written and visual imagery. Examination of the writing (style, word choice, level of reading difficulty, for example) and of the icons (photographs, cartoons, ads, and general layout) provide the opportunity to examine how form and content are designed for appealing to various audiences.

POPULAR MAGAZINES

To ascertain which magazines appeal to student audiences, I devised a simple questionnaire and gave it to approximately 300 junior high school and 450 senior high school students. Composed of a relatively limited sample, the survey--which could best be described as belonging to the "quick and dirty" school of research--was used as a means for providing some insights into young people's preferences in magazines. (A sample of the questionnaire is provided at the end of the article.)

Two junior high schools and one senior high school in the Columbus, Ohio, area participated in the survey. School X is a middle to lower middle class suburban junior high school. The student population is predominantly white. Only seventh graders participated in the survey. School Y is located in a low socio-economic area; the majority of the students are black. Questionnaires were given to seventh and eighth graders. School Z is a middle to upper middle class high school. The school prides itself on the number of students who go on to college. Tenth, eleventh, and twelfth graders participated in the survey.

In reporting the results, I have listed only the three most frequently named magazines for all the groups. The number given after the magazine indicated the number of times it was named by students in that group. The percentage of students selecting the magazine is also provided. Table 1 summarizes the results from school X; Table 2, school Y; Table 3, school Z.

Table 1 (School X - 7th Grade)

Boys (N=91)	Girls (N=72)
1. MAD - 51 (56%)	1. TEEN - 22 (31%)
2. SPORTS ILLUSTRATED - 37 (41%)	2. MAD - 21 (29%)
3. "COMICS" - 14 (15%)	3. SEVENTEEN - 15 (21%)

Table 2 (School Y)

7th Grade

Boys (N=32)	Girls (N=29)
1. SPORTS ILLUSTRATED - 20 (63%)	1. EBONY - 16 (55%)
2. EBONY - 9 (28%)	2. JET - 15 (52%)
3. JET - 8 (25%)	3. RIGHT-ON - 5 (17%)

8th Grade

Boys (N=34)	Girls (N=30)
1. SPORTS ILLUSTRATED - 13 (38%)	1. EBONY - 10 (33%)
2. EBONY - 11 (32%)	2. JET - 9 (30%)
3. JET - 11 (32%)	3. SCOPE - 7 (23%)

Table 3 (School Z)

10th Grade

Boys (N=90)	Girls (N=76)
1. SPORTS ILLUSTRATED - 40 (44%)	1. SEVENTEEN - 50 (66%)
2. TIME - 21 (23%)	2. TIME - 15 (20%)
3. MAD - 15 (17%)	3. SPORTS ILLUSTRATED - 10 (13%)

11th Grade

Boys (N=57)	Girls (N=64)
1. SPORTS ILLUSTRATED - 32 (56%)	1. SEVENTEEN - 38 (59%)
2. TIME - 22 (39%)	2. TIME - 19 (30%)
3. NEWSWEEK - 12 (21%)	3. READER'S DIGEST - 17 (27%)

12th Grade

Boys (N=66)	Girls (N=93)
1. SPORTS ILLUSTRATED - 33 (50%)	1. SEVENTEEN - 48 (52%)
2. TIME - 33 (50%)	2. TIME - 45 (48%)
3. NATIONAL GEOGRAPHICS - 15 (23%)	3. SPORTS ILLUSTRATED - 24 (26%)

The survey results indicated some obvious, and not unexpected, differences between boys' and girls' choices in magazines: the most popular magazine among boys was

SPORTS ILLUSTRATED whereas girls chose "fashion" magazines, TEEN and SEVENTEEN. The most outstanding difference is found between school Y and the two other schools. Although the boys at school Y also selected SPORTS ILLUSTRATED, the other top choices of both boys and girls were magazines written primarily for black Americans, EBONY and JET.

In general, the results indicate a rather limited choice of magazines by students at all levels. Magazine preferences, at least in this sample, seem to change little between grades seven and twelve. This lack of change has several implications for the English classroom. Assuming that an English class is intended to broaden the reading interests of students, then it seems clear that students should be encouraged to become aware of why they read particular magazines, and to realize what other magazines are available to them. Minimally, therefore, the study of magazines might have four objectives: First, to increase students' awareness of the multiplicity of magazines available; second, to have students recognize the apparent purpose and intended audience of specific magazines; third, to have students be able to recognize and evaluate both the strengths and weaknesses of particular magazines; and, finally, to have students consider the cultural implications of particular magazines--what the existence of specific magazines reveals about life in America in the 1970s.

A general outline for magazine study could follow this basic format: close study of specific magazines ⟶ generalization and inference about the purpose of certain magazines ⟶ application of the skills acquired. The close study would require students to answer relatively basic, simple questions about the magazines; the second level of study would emphasize making inferences based on the data obtained from the simpler questions (this would include comparisons of different types of magazines); and, finally, students would be asked to develop a magazine, applying the knowledge they have gained from the various analyses. A set of questions and recommendations such as the following might be prepared to aid the students in their study.

TECHNIQUES FOR STUDYING MAGAZINES

Close Study

Verbal Elements

1. Does the name of the magazine indicate appeal to a specific audience?
2. Do the titles of articles listed on the cover indicate appeal to a specific audience?
3. Check the Table of Contents. Do the titles of the articles, as well as the list of regular "departments," reveal a particular audience? Is the scope of the magazine narrow or broad?
4. Does the magazine include fiction? If it does, what kinds of stories are they?
   a. is the protagonist a man or a woman?
   b. is it an action story, a love story, or what?
   c. does the story have a happy ending?
   d. does the story seem to depict life realistically?
   e. are any of the characters from ethnic or racial minorities?
5. Are the nonfiction articles primarily impressionistic, or do the authors document their sources of information?
   a. do the articles seem to be carefully researched?
   b. are the articles primarily about people in specific occupations (performers, sports figures, politicians) or specific ethnic or racial minorities?
   c. do the authors reveal a particular attitude toward the person or group of people they are writing about? Are there specific terms that seem to recur?
6. Does the magazine have an editorial section? What kinds of issues are

discussed? What is the magazine's position on the issues?

7. Does the magazine have a "letters to the editor" section? Does it publish letters which are critical of the magazine?

Pictorial Elements

1. Do the photographs or drawings on the cover indicate appeal to a specific type of audience?
2. Does the magazine include few or many photographs? Why do some magazines employ more photos than others?
3. How do the photographs relate to the articles in the magazine?
4. Does the magazine have cartoons? What kinds of cartoons are they?
   a. who are the subjects of the cartoons (children, adults, families, animals)?
   b. are the cartoons satirical?
   c. do the cartoons reinforce the values, attitudes portrayed in other parts of the magazine?

Advertising (verbal and pictorial)

1. What types of advertising does the magazine have (household products, automobiles, fashions, hardware, cosmetics)?
2. Do the ads appeal more to men or women?
   a. are men or women depicted in the ads?
   b. are the people in the ads attractive? ordinary? young? old?
   c. are there certain words that seem to recur in specific ads?
3. Which types of propaganda techniques seem to be used most often (testimonials, glittering generalities, plain folks, band wagon, etc.)?
4. Do the ads seem appropriate given the types of articles presented in the magazine?

Generalization and Inference

1. What seems to be the major purpose of the magazine? provide information? entertainment? or a combination of the two? Do most magazines make a distinction between providing information and entertainment?
2. What is the effect of the magazine on the reader? Does it seem to fulfill a need certain individuals or groups might have?

An example from the survey of student preferences illustrates one possible response to this type of question. EBONY was popular at the school which had a predominantly black student population. A recurrent reaction to the magazine was that it was chosen because "it was about black people." Some students were more specific and noted that they liked it because "it's about black people hwo have made it." Even without the benefit of the students' comments, it is possible to infer that the magazine fulfulls a need in at least two respects. First, it responds to the desire of most people to read about someone similar to himself/herself. In the case of EBONY, black students are able toread about other black Americans. Second, the magazine provides information which is probably not readily available in other mass media. EBONY could be also be viewed as fulfulling the needs of non-black readers who are interested in finding out more about the various minorities in this country.

The magazine includes sections such as "Speaking of People," a regular feature which presents photographs and brief career descriptions of successful black men and women. The articles include "Muhammad Ali's Challenge to Black Men," the cover story; and "Progress Report 1964-1974: A Decade of Struggle," an overview of the changes that have occurred in the lives of black Americans during the past ten years. In addition to the articles, the advertising in the magazine also focuses on black Americans. Ads for products such as Peter Pan Peanut Butter, Chevrolet, Virginia Slims cigarettes, and Johnson's Baby Oil, for instance, feature photographs of black men and women. In contrast to magazines that present a predominantly white America, EBONY emphasizes the black culture in America. (References are to the January 1975 issue of EBONY.)

3. What kind of a "symbolic world" does the magazine create? How do the various elements, verbal and pictorial, help to create this "world?"

The "symbolic world" of TEEN, for example, is one where the dominant concerns of teenage girls are appearance, boys, and show business personalities. The cover photo is of a blonde, blue-eyed, attractive teenage girl. The emphasis on appearance is epitomized by articles such as "A Measure of Beauty," "Inch up on Your Makeup Mistakes," "Win the Nail Game: Hands Down Feet First;" and by the advertising--"To have this kind of healthy, clear, and glowing complexion, you must start out clean," "A Girl Doesn't have to be Flat-Chested." The photographs in the ads depict rosy-checked, blemish-free, shiny-faced, all-American white teenage girls who are usually pictured with similarly healthy-looking, similing, all-American, white teenage boys.

Coping with the opposite sex is dealt with in articles such as "Love, Who Needs It?" ("Judy used to fall asleep at night praying for a boyfriend," p. 32); and the regular columns, "Dear Jack" and "Dear Jill," teenage equivalents to "Dear Abby." The feature stories are on show business personalities--"TV's RHODA, Valerie Harper," "The Old Beatle Myth (& Magic) Still Alive," "Trial of Folk Hero Billy Jack." In general, the "world" created by TEEN is one which reflects white, middle class assumptions about what it is to be a teenage girl. The articles and features reflect real, but also the most superficial, concerns of young women. The ads in the magazine echo these concerns and, simultaneously, exploit the teenagers' need for acceptance. (References are to the February 1975 issue of TEEN.)

4. What similarities or differences exist between magazines? What comparisons can be made in terms of assumed audience, types of articles, advertising, and visual elements?

One possible approach would be to compare "women's" magazines such as McCALLS, GOOD HOUSEKEEPING, BETTER HOMES AND GARDENS with "men's" magazines such as ARGOSY, TRUE, or POPULAR MECHANICS. Another, more specific, assignment would be to compare the fiction in "literary" magazines (HARPER'S, ATLANTIC, NEW YORKER) with stories in the "love" or "confession" magazines (TRUE CONFESSIONS, MODERN ROMANCES). Students should be able to recognize eventually that certain magazines contain stories with highly conventionalized plots or forumlas while others tend to be marked by greater invention. This distinction between convention/invention in a story might be applied to readers' expectations. For example, TRUE CONFESSIONS employs a strict formula in its stories; virtue triumphs and/or evil is punished. What does this imply about the readers of such formulistic plots? A comparison of the literary and confession magazines in terms of feature articles and advertising would also provide many insights. Other possibilities for comparisons could include working with movie and TV magazines (MODERN SCREEN, PHOTOPLAY, TV GUIDE, TV RADIO-MIRROR), news magazines (TIME, NEWSWEEK, THE NEW REPUBLIC) and trade journals which are intended for lay readers (PSYCHOLOGY TODAY).

5. Has the magazine changed significantly over time?

Answering this question would require that past issues be available to students. Questions here might deal with how changes in society are reflected by changes in the magazine or in the development of new magazines.

6. Does the magazine have mythic dimensions? Are there ritualistic qualities to the magazine?

Anthropologists have repeatedly demonstrated that all cultures contain myths and culture heroes who embody these myths. If we consider myths in anthropological terms--that is, not "lies" but rather stories about superhuman beings, archetypal patterns and ritual enactments--then it may be worthwhile to consider whether the protagonists in magazine fiction such as cowboys, detectives, astronauts; or the

celebrities in sports and show business magazines personify mythic qualities. Specific questions which students might consider include the following: Are the exploits on a football field used as metaphors for larger cultural dimensions? Do the stories employ scapegoats, demonstrate the purging of "unnatural" or irrational forces in society, or portray the restoration of truth and goodness? How often, especially in advertisements, are "artificial" elements juxtaposed against "natural" values in products such as shampoos, foods, or clothing? How often are these natural values correlated with Edenic imagery or pastoral themes? Consider, for example, the pictorial qualities in ads for EVE cigarettes.

After students have had the chance to become familiar with a variety of magazines by using the analyses outlined above, they should be given the opportunity to apply the techniques learned. A viable synthesizing activity would be to have the students create their own magazine. A simple outline for them to use--based on the techniques discussed earlier--is provided below.

APPLICATION--MAKING A MAGAZINE

1. What type of magazine will it be? What will its major purpose be?
2. Who are the intended audiences of the magazine?
3. Given a specified audience (e.g. teenage girls, housewives, businessmen, teenage boys)
   a. what would be a good name for the magazine?
   b. what kinds of articles would be appropriate? How difficult/sophisticated could the writing be?
   c. what kinds of fiction, if any, should be included?
   d. should there be regular features that would be included in every issue (editorial section, advice columns, news features)?
   e. what types of advertising should be included?
   f. what kinds of photographs/drawings should be included? Should the magazine have many or few photographs/drawings?
   g. should the magazine include cartoons? what kind?
4. How would you publicize the magazine to the people you think would buy it?

The creation of a magazine, or at least the opportunity to consider how a magazine would be composed, is analogous to the other types of questions and problems raised in this essay. Like other cultural artifacts, magazines can help students understand not only themselves, but also what expectations creators of media have of their audiences. Magazine study, in additon to encouraging students to work with language, including doublespeak, is beneficial in a number of respects. As a study of a popular mass medium, it provides valuable insights about our society. For classroom activities, magazine study is adaptable to individualized instruction, small group work, or entire class participation. Because magazines incorporate photographs, drawings, and cartoons as well as essays and fiction, students will be able to select from a variety of activities those which they find most interesing and challenging. And these activities can provide one more means of helping students to understand the multifaceted nature of popular culture--its audiences, its appeals, its dreams and, often, covertly, its nightmares.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

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Bruce A. Lohof, "A Morphology of the Modern Fable," JOURNAL OF POPULAR CULTURE, Summer 1974, pp. 15-27.
Ruari McLean, MAGAZINE DESIGN, NY: Oxford Press, 1969.
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Roland E. Wolseley, UNDERSTANDING MAGAZINES, Ames, Iowa: Iowa State U Press, 1965.
Helen Woodward, THE LADY PERSUADERS, NY: Ivan Obolensky, 1960.

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Name of School _____ Check One Please:
Grade Level _____ Male _____ Female_____

I work at Ohio State University with college students who are studying to become English teachers. I believe that a good English teacher should know what kinds of books, magazines, films, and television shows young people enjoy. Would you please help me in this task by answering just a couple of questions?

Remember that this form will remain anonymous; that is, you will not have to put your name on it. Also, this has nothing to do with the regular work you do for your English classes. The forms will all be sent to me.

Thank you for your help.

1. What magazines do you really like? These can be magazines you read on your own outside of school or magazines you read in school. List below as few or as many as you wish.
2. Please tell me what it is about the magazine, or magazines, that makes them fun for you to read. Name whatever it is that you particularly like about each of the magazines you list. You may list as many things as you want.

Name of Magazine	Things I Particularly Like About This Magazine
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

(Please use the other side if you need more room.)

GOODBYE 8, HELLO 16

Lowell Boberg, Jordan School District, Sandy, Utah

"Of course no one in high school makes 16mm pictures with optical sound. The process is far too complicated and expensive. With 8mm and a good tape recorder you can do a fine job." This statement was made by a speaker at one of the sessions of a national humanities convention I attended two years ago. As I listened, I squirmed uncomfortably, squelching the impulse to raise my hand and contradict. For we at Jordan High School, Sandy, Utah, had already completed our modernized version of Chaucer's "Nun's Priest's Tale" in 16mm optical sound and color and were highly elated over its reception. What's more, we were all set to begin filming a feature-length story in 16mm and optical sound entitled ONE HEAD WELL DONE from a story of the same name by John D. Swain. Work on this film had been going on for six months and with the exception of professional camera and sound assistance, it would be all the work of high school students.

We could have "played it safe" at Jordan and used 8mm and the tape recorder as the conference speaker advised. Had we done so, we would have involved a small group of film buffs in projects that would seldom leave the school building. But we chose not to; with my students it was 16mm with "the sound on the film so we can show our work anywhere on standard equipment" or not at all. As one student put it, "with 8mm we're just playing at making movies, but with 16mm we feel we're really making them, for real, to show anywhere. We ought to be able to make them pay for themselves by showing them to other high schools." Our choice was a dangerous one because to my knowledge, no other high school had attempted movie-making with the idea of marketing the product and it would of necessity involve a larger and more diverse group of students. But our choice was also a lucky one; otherwise, I would never have discovered one of the most exciting inter-disciplinary, multi-disciplinary media of all the processes of education.

It all began three years ago when my Humanities and Advanced Placement English classes were on the prowl for a project to undertake for the year. They were all exceptional students and they felt that contenting themselves with the routine and responsibilities of regular classwork would surely lead to some kind of insidious atrophy. When two of the students announced that they would like to modernize Chaucer's "Nun's Priest's Tale," someone remarked, "If you do, we could maybe make a movie of it." In the next few moments, the maybe vanished and we had found our project: a 20-25 minute 16mm optical sound, color production of the Chaucer classic.

"The Nun's Priest's Tale" became an inter-disciplinary project in its early stages. It didn't take long for the students to realize that they needed help from other departments of the school. There were costumes to be designed and made, which necessitated the services of the sewing classes; there were the titles and the credits, which meant the art department must be involved; and there was music to be composed if, hopefully, there were any young composers available. Other matters such as selection of locations, gathering of needed properties, casting and direction, the students could handle within the two classes. The task assigned to me was to find ways and means of filming the film in the desired 16mm with optical sound. As the work progressed, excitement reached a high peak. The students had "turned on" not only in the project but also in the regular classes. Regular school work seemed to have more meaning now.

My role, however, was more frustrating than exciting. The search for ways and means of filming in 16mm led me discouragingly from one dead end street to another. Sixteen millimeter was "too expensive for high school students to use; it requires professional equipment and expertise" I was told. With a condescending pat on the

back, I was advised to "stick with 8mm. That's best for schools." Were it not that in my search I had worked very closely with the Jordan District Instructional Media Center, Mr. Orr Hill, an enthusiastic supporter of our project, and a man who never gives up or lets anyone else give up, I might have failed in my responsibility.

I still believe in miracles because one happened to us. As the school year drew to a close, we found ourselves all ready with the "Nun's Priest's Tale" but for the filming. We had a choice between yielding and using 8mm or giving up the project. Then, just like the climax in a grade B movie, it happened. Mr. Hill found a young man who had just formed his own company to do 16mm film work locally. He would do ours for a price we could pay. We would be his first customer. We did all the filming in five days, the dubbing in one afternoon, and the music recording in one evening. The following September we held our world premiere, Hollywood style, with moving search lights at our high school entrance and a lighted aisle along which our stars and special guests passed to their reserved seats in the auditorium. Best of all, our work was enthusiastically applauded by a capacity audience.

"The Nun's Priest's Tale" scored far beyond our expectations. It was circulated widely and enthusiastically hailed wherever it went. When the educational experts who had counselled us against going the 16mm, optical sound began to call and request the film to use as an example of what resourceful innovative students can do, we felt we had really arrived. There was nothing to do but go on to something bigger and that is precisely what we did.

We formulated plans for a feature-length film with the dialogue "lip synchronized" the same as in professional films. Except for the professionals who would work with our student camera and sound crews, the film would be a student directed, student made project. A class in film production, actually a sequence of four six-week mini courses, each focusing on a sequential phase of production, was organized.

In our first phase, we selected our story, ONE HEAD WELL DONE a short story of the 1930's by John D. Swain and the student writers began the task of converting it into what became a 58 page, 105 scene scenario with twelve additional characters and a new ending even more ironic than the original one. During the second and third phases we concentrated on art and the collection of properties and our young man, selected to do the musical score, began composing musical themes for later orchestration and recording. The final session was devoted to the actual filming of our project.

We found a wide and endless variety of things to do in addition to the art, scenario, casting, and music work. There was a life-like replica of a freshly severed human head to be made and also a shrunken one, headhunter style, of the same craft from a local university and with the Jordan art teacher. There was a kris, the traditional sword of Borneo to be made. Here two students worked with a metal arts specialist who fashioned the instrument for them from a piece of sheet steel. The script called for a bomb to explode, not too violently, but enough to scare the gangsters. Two students managed to achieve the effect by using a large quantity of flash powder wired to the snap lever of a camera.

Probably our most exciting discovery was the community. Of the 105 scenes of the movie, only four could be filmed on the Jordan campus; the others, the students insisted, should be on actual locations. Salt Lake City Corporation city commissioners passed Resolution 722, which gave us permission to film anywhere on the streets and sidewalks of the city and at the international airport, all these with police assistance and cooperation. A prominent mortuary gave us use of its chapel and even provided a bronze casket for our gangster funeral scenes. We were graciously accommodated in one of the city's posh bistros for an afternoon for filming

a night club sequence. The Hutchins Museum of the nearby town of Lehi closed its doors to the public and gave us free rein for a day's filming. A prominent doctor and the proprietor of a busy drug store both allowed us use of their facilities after closing time. Everyone seemed anxious to help. "You're very welcome. We're glad to help you. I only wish schools did things like this when I was in high school" was a typical comment of our benefactors as we thanked them.

Work on ONE HEAD WELL DONE ran beyond the close of the school throughout the summer. The students were so caught up in the project they refused to rush it to an earlier completion and they were willing to spend the extra time. After filming was completed, the student directors carefully supervised the selection of "takes" and the editing, arguing tenaciously with the editor if he differed with them. They knew very well what they wanted and they always had their way. After the student composer had finished his score, selected his musicians and conducted the group in two afternoon-to-midnight recording sessions, the film was ready for printing.

The world premier of ONE HEAD WELL DONE was held on November 8, 1972, again in Hollywood style, exactly 50 weeks from the start of the project. To say that the 120 students involved in the film were ecstatic over their efforts and the film's reception is an understatement; they walked on air for days.

We were finally lucky enough to sell our film. Then under terms of agreement with the purchase, a new group of students became involved with the advertising and distribution of the film locally while the purchaser assumed responsibility for national sales and distribution. Though film marketing and distribution is something totally new, these students were eager for the experience and they covered the high schools of the state with an enthusiasm matching that of their student friends who made the film.

Film making is both inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary in its scope. If the students involved do not have learning experiences in several different subject or skill areas in the process of the project they at least all become acutely aware of the interdependence of all skills, crafts, talents, and knowledge that must go into the making of a motion picture. They come to realize that every task, however small, directly or indirectly constitutes an integral part of the film as a whole. Therefore, they work harmoniously as members of a team knowing that their contribution is important.

Students turn on in film making more than they have ever done in any other activity I have sponsored; and I might add, I have sponsored hundreds of activities during my career. It brings out their best in effort, talent, and resourcefulness and often to their own surprise. They don't always know they have talent until a project such as this comes along. I have watched students grow from shy, insecure, shadowy creatures into poised, positive, self-respecting individuals all because they could see that what they did in one film project <u>was</u> important to the film; therefore they became important to themselves. I have watched dissident students, seldom out of the principal's hair, because of their ceaseless campaign for changes in dress code and student government, emerge as strong and positive leaders, forgetting their "causes" as they took the film over, or as the film project "took" them over. I have also observed how immensely proud a group of students can be over the public reception of their work. Not only do they themselves walk taller but so does the entire student body they represent.

So, if you are casting about for a school wide project with built in excitement and inter- and multi-disciplinary learning experiences, try making a 16mm motion picture with optical sound. It's hard work but it is rewarding beyond any other project I know of.

We at Jordan High are firmly conviced that 16mm film making in high school is here to stay and that in time it will exert a strong influence on the processes of secondary education. To prove our belief, as we go about with our marketing activities for ONE HEAD WELL DONE in cooperation with its buyer, we are also laying plans for production of the WENDIGO, a story of the horrors of hunters pursued by a primordial monster in the Canadian Northwoods. We think it entirely possible that someday the terms; "Camera! Sound! Roll 'em!" just may become as common as roll call.

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SHOPTALK:

"'They have so few resources. And once they're saddled with a child, it's all over. Their lives are ended,' said Isabel Byron, who teaches English and women's studies at a minority high school in Manhattan.

'By the time they're 3, little girls in nursery school are already quite well aware of what they're supposed to be. They're stuck in the doll corner doing repetitive house chores. And they also know that what the boys do is going to be different--and superior,' said Selma Greenberg, a specialist in early childhood education who teaches at Hofstra University.

And in the classroom, she added, 'no one considers it inappropriate behavior that the girls are passive and unassertive. But these girls are the ones who fall apart at 35.'

What these women were talking about were the effects of sexism in schools. They also call is sex-stereotyping in education. Or sex-role orientation. But by any name, it means the same thing: the influencing of children, through the educational process, to see themselves in certain stereotypical ways that often narrow their present behavior and limit their aspirations for the future.

'Ninety per cent of the supervisors and teachers in that country have no idea of what we're talking about. You're not dealing with people who have any awareness of the issue--except as a joke. And it's hard to change teachers' and administrators' attitudes, because most of them are traditional people in a traditional profession. You don't know many swinging superintendents of school systems, do you?'

Where are the women in history books, in literature? these feminists ask. Why are the girls in basic readers all passive and inept? Why are girls taught to apply measuring skills meetly to recipes? Why do problems in math books have males weighing concrete, investing money, building bridges and paying mortgages, while the women worry about bolts of cloth?

'It was great to find out,' said Rona Solberg, a Highland Park, NJ, middle-school teacher, 'that there are people here from all over the country; that something really is happening; that you're not alone.'" (Lisa Hammel, "Teachers Meet to Fight Sexism in the Schools," NY TIMES, Nov. 25, 1974, p. 26)

One of the best places to get non-sexist material is The Feminist Press, Box 334, Old Westbury, Long Island, NY 11568, which prints the WOMEN'S STUDIES NEWSLETTER and also a number of books. Write for a catalog and sample NEWSLETTER.

THE WESTERN GOES TO SCHOOL

Nicholas J. Karolides, University of Wisconsin, River Falls

The national romance with the Western goes back at least to 1902 (earlier if dime novels are included) with the appearance on the Best Seller list for two successive years of Owen Wester's THE VIRGINIAN. This public response has not waned over the years though the trail of the Western hero has taken many turns: from the sober dedication to code and role of the Virginian to the campfire harmonies of Gene Autry; from the clean-living heroics of Shane to the grubby, hard-core cruelty of THE COWBOYS. There may be something here for everyone--for popularity isn't limited to one generation or another, nor to one medium. It is widespread and steadfast.

Leisure reading, which is what this popularity represents, is founded on interest. Sufficient reason. But is this enough for "study"--for inclusion in school curricula? Are there any bases for discussion beyond responses to plot and character?

The very ubiquitousness of the Western and its related popularity provide an important basic rationale. Frederick Jackson Turner in his seminal essay of 1893, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," proposed the far-reaching influence of the western frontier on American life, the character of its people, and the nature of its institutions. A parallel proposition can be drawn to suggest the potential impact of some seventy years of vicarious contact with a place and interaction with a way of life upon the American consciousness.

This overlapping pattern of "interest," of involvement with the West, first actually and then through the imagination is notable. Since earliest colonization, white inhabitants faced West, yearned West. While this Westward movement was material in the acquisition of land and space, it also conveyed an affective concept caught in Horace Greeley's phrase "Go West, young man." The West thus spelled achievement, at least potentially, and became both a national and a human beacon. From beacon to symbol is a short enough route, much less arduous than any of the overland trails. When the frontier closed finally (officially so designated in 1890 by the Bureau of the Census) as a material place available for conquest, the beacon remained, perhaps had to remain, to retain for Americans a symbol of the possibilities that had become ingrained in the culture.

A concept closely related to this Western impluse is the recognition, the willingness to believe, that in the West Americans found what they strove for, an American dream, variously defined beyond the material achievements to include a broad spectrum of values: peace/space; freedom; manhood; independence; conquest (victory over odds--man, beast, elements); and, occasionally, maturity. A neat ideal. Perhaps it happened thus--for some; in the imagination, it happens more easily as we transport ourselves to the environment of our potentialities. Through books, films and television we take to the trail and become those ever-capable heroes in those wideopen spaces, working out our destinies.

Space is a key ingredient; West is interchangeable with wilderness. And wilderness has had a comparable yet distinct thread of advocacy in American life, though not altogether without contest. There is, of course, Thoreau and his recent-day disciples who returned to commune with the earth. Wilderness longing is also reflected in the current respect for the Indian way of life--his living with nature--as well as the long tradition of scouting and camping. Links can also be drawn to the responses to such activities as hunting, fishing, snowmobiling (reflect on the reasons often given by participants); to the use of the outdoors in advertisements from cigarettes to atmosphere deodorants; to the reading preferences of adolescents for outdoor adventure stories; and finally, to the whole ecological movement. In its rep-

resentation of the original wilderness, incorporating all of these impulses, the West takes on mythic as well as historic proportions, embodying the heroic elements of the Dream along with the concept of the eternal Garden: man at his best and the earth at its most beneficently fruitful.

This admixture of the historical, sociological, psychological and literary suggests the potential ramifications of the Western. The seemingly charted territory offers a wide range for exploration for readers and viewers. One can follow the relatively familiar mainstream to define its course, or steer into the meandering streams to discover the rich sources of the American consciousness. Selection and organization of materials and audience are instrumental in determining the route and purpose of study. In the paragraphs below I shall discuss several of the more significant themes in relation to materials that might be utilized with secondary school students. I will also suggest organizational framework and purposes.

Definition of image of the West and the Westerner makes for a good opener. This not only stimulates discussion because everyone has something to offer but also brings to the forefront the personal and public stereotypes. Knowing where we start makes ensuing discussions more meaningful. A wide variety of factors can be identified to reveal the image of place--visual-physical expectations and feelings, activities, and the behavior and nature of the people. Curiously, while certain characteristics and details--like wide, open spaces, horses, guns, rugged men--recur from class to class, invariably some variations emerge. For example, some groups "see" only cowboys and gunmen while others include frontier farmers, hunters and trappers. A follow-up of these images to identify sources is fascinating. Students can often specify, usually films and television, and they readily reminisce, these recollections being revealing too, of their perceptions and attitudes.

A natural development of this discussion is reading and viewing materials that represent image formation. An obvious approach is the historical but teachers risk the hazard of tediousness if it is overdone. A careful selection of titles, organized to juxtapose common traits or dramatic situations, can highlight the pattern of image formation. Available early books, both pacesetters, include THE VIRGINIAN by Owen Wester (1902, Perennial) and THE COVERED WAGON by Emerson Hough (1922, Washington Square). The first established the romantic cowboy ideal while the second focused on a covered wagon train heading to Oregon. They are valuable as measures of heroic characterization in relation to each other and also to later books. Zane Grey is another source; also the previously mentioned dime novels, circa 1890-1900, featuring Deadwood Dick or Buffalo Bill, are great fun and enlightening if any can be located (reprinted by New Interational Library). (Henry Nash Smith in VIRGIN LAND, Vintage, 1950, has several fine chapters detailing and interpreting these early works.) Later models are more easily found. Very useful is SHANE by Jack Shaffer (1949, Bantam) because it exemplifies both types of characters with clarity and magnificence. Walter D. Edmond's DRUMS ALONG THE MOHAWK (1936, Bantam) and A.B. Guthrie's THE WAY WEST (1949, Pocket Book) are longer, more detailed and broader in scope, but they highlight well the frontier attitudes and behaviors of the hunter-farmer. Less exacting but expressive of the cowboy vein are the books of Max Brand, Louis L'Amour and Clay Fisher. THE BRAVE COWBOY by Edward Abbey (1971, Ballantine) is set in the present; it comes around full circle suggesting the evolution of the cowboy hero, perhaps, the last of a breed.

Another approach is contrastive, pitting against each other western men of different purpose, occupation or values; indeed the very essence of the West can be counterpointed. Hanalin Garland, the turn of the century realist, provides a stark, negative image in his MAIN TRAVELED ROADS stories (Signet). The beaten characters, the sense of foreclosed promises and misery belie the portrait of progress and of men's expectation of being able to achieve in SHANE. The challenge to the myth is

all the more engrossing because SHANE contains realistic elements and is often largely so interpreted because of these and readers' preconceived perceptions. THE TREES or THE FIELDS by Conrad Richter (1940, 1946, Bantam) provide a comparable contrast. For mature readers, Walter VanTilberg Clark's THE OX BOW INCIDENT (1940, Signet) provides a vividly anti-mythical rendering of that expression of Western justice, the lynch mob, which is so neatly and directly rationalized in THE VIRGINIAN; the concept of men and law is also reflected in SHANE. Other contrasts can be put together in relation to publication date and motif as suggested in the previous paragraph.

Representation of image development would be incomplete without incorporating the visual media, especially with an eye toward stereotype formation. Availability is not a problem here; if money is, television offers a ready though not predictable source. Four versions of THE VIRGINIAN (two silents, featuring Dustin Farnum and Kenneth Harlan respectively, the 1929 Gary Cooper starmaker, and the 1946 Joel McCrea version) are revealing of societal interaction in effecting change both in the characterization and in the omitted or added incidents. The 1922 silent classic, THE COVERED WAGON (from The Museum of Modern Art, New York City) is at once more romantic and realistic than later "copies." SHANE with Alan Ladd, THE OX BOW INCIDENT with Henry Fonda, THE GUNFIGHTER with Gregory Peck, LONELY ARE THE BRAVE with Kirk Douglas based on THE BRAVE COWBOY are only a few. These are established films but I would recommend B films as well, both old and recent ones for these often more directly depict stereotypes of the time (e.d. RED RIVER, etc.).

The quest for independence is a central concern of Western characters--along with its concomitant quality, individuality. It is interwoven into the whole fabric of the Western impulse and landscape. (Adolescents are responsive to this quest, sympathetic to characters enacting it, for it so dovetails their own preoccupations.) Some characters in Westerns are attempting to achieve this independence while others manifest it as emblematic to their beings. In most instances it is made to seem a holy cause--perhaps a crusade, incorporating thus the concept of journey, right for its own sake, though compromises are achieved when some heroes marry. A.B. Guthrie's hero in THE BIG SKY (1947, Houghton Mifflin) a mature book, stands rather apart in the tragic consequences of his independence and isolation. Further, the code of independence has ramifications beyond the hero when it is seen applied also to social and political behaviors.

An underlying conflict in Westerns is the lure of the wilderness and the antagonism to settlement. As in THE BIG SKY or THE TREES some heroes defy civilization or leave it behind them to seek an open environment. In these works the settlements are depicted from the merely suffocating to the heinous, and the wilderness thus becomes not only escape but a source of inspiration. In THE VIRGINIAN it builds character and manhood. But the case against civilization isn't unanimous. Hawthorne in "Young Goodman Brown" depicts the darkness and evil emanating therefrom, reflecting the hard ridge of reaction of his time. In most Westerns with this view, the attitudes fall away from this line to a desire to recreate settlement, at once using and eschewing the wilderness, ready to challenge and change it. Thus the environmental and social concerns of the day can be seen enacted in raw, initial terms. In the more sensitive texts the need for community and the desire to commune with nature become but divergent expressions of humanity, one not easily nullifying the other.

While there are other issues and patterns to be explored, that of violence deserves attention. Of course, it is impossible to unravel all the threads in a few lines so as to reveal what brought us to the trigger-quick episodes in recent materials. The Virginian, the hero of THE COVERED WAGON, even Shane seek every means to settle their conflictions before being forced to use violence. And then killing is justified in the name of honor, pride of manhood, protection of the social order and women: in short, the code. But for other heroes, violence expresses manhood. In THE COWBOYS

by William Jennings (1971, Bantam) we see the young boys maturing, or expressing their new found maturity, through violent retribution, though to a mature reader there is an ironic level of interpretation. Some heroes--THE BIG SKY, THE BRAVE COWBOY--are at last undone by violence. Illustrations from the visual media especially in recent materials in which characters respond with guns as automatic reflexes are pertinent in establishing the character and use of violence.

Throughout this essay, I have been deliberately male-oriented because for many the West was peopled by men. There are in the image the occasional Calamity Janes, dance hall girls and the sunbonneted, hands-wringing, often grim-faced homemakers. And women can in effect be selected out of westerns, despite their critical role and purpose in the western journey. The retrieval of the presented image of women in popular print and non-print media--perhaps set against historical reality--will convey valuable insights about the roles of women and American culture. The materials I have mentioned provide a wide gamut of profiles of women, often secondary; others might include GIANTS IN THE EARTH by Ole Rolvaag (1927, Perrenial), A LANTERN IN HER HAND by Bess Streeter Aldrich (1928, Perma Bound)--a vivid contrast, and MY ANTONIA by Willa Cather (1918, Houghton Mifflin).

The place of the Indian in the West and the Western suggests a parallel discussion. I refer here not to books about Indians, their culture and societal interactions but rather to their depiction, usually as the enemy if not omitted, in the traditional Western.

Tracing here the possible routes to follow in studying the Western is to suggest the meaningfulness of the journey as well as the landscape, for reflected are significant symptoms of American culture and the human psyche. Adolescents' interest in these materials can be tapped to enhance their understandings and to enrich their literary and imaginative odyssey.

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SHOPTALK:

"For one thing, soap operas are the only programs on television that do not adopt a patronizing attitude toward women. There are more women doctors, lawyers, writers, judges, nurses, District Attorneys and corporation executives on daytime television than were ever dreamed of on prime time. However, the true point about prime-time television is that it is insulting not only to women, but to everybody. The soaps offer real evidence that the insult is unnecessary.

Sure, there's a lot of cliche-ridden garbage on soap operas. There is also more consistent, serious effort to deal sensitively with the red-hot issues of the day, from abortion to homosexuality, than is ever seen on prime time, except in occasional documentaries. I think that our almost automatic contempt for the people who watch soap operas prevents us from acknowledging a great deal that is valuable in the programs themselves. And if we have all quite finished snorting and slapping our thighs, perhaps we ought to take a moment to consider whether ridicule is really the brightest response to the soap viewer--even the soap addict.

In the meantime, our contempt for the soap addict has obscured the fact that the soaps are the only place on television where you may see adult topics--rape, alcoholism, frigidity, the plight of the professional woman who doesn't want children, racism, sexism, even incest--explored in a dramatic context as if they were problems that involve real people." (Beth R. Gutcheon, "Look for Cop-Outs on Prime Time, Not on 'Soaps,'" NY TIMES, "Arts and Leisure" section, Dec. 16, 1973, p. 21)

VALUES VIA TELEVISION

Sue Hardesty, Chandler High School

Media companies are producing a prodigious amount of materials these days on values ranging in scope from Learning Corporation's fifteen-film series called SEARCHING FOR VALUES to short series of values from PARENT'S MAGAZINE, AIM, and many other companies. These films are frequently expensive and hard to get for the classroom; frequently teachers despair of ever getting the media to work with a unit on values. But one of the major influences on student values is a medium found in 98% of their homes, free for the asking. This medium is, of course, that frequently cursed boob-tube called television.

Because most of us have read articles about the great influences of television which frequently chronicle the number of hours students will have watched by the time they graduate, this discussion need not delve into the statistics. And other articles have shown why television is bad, commercials are bad--either throw the whole concept away or vastly improve it. But an honest look at the situation will indicate that many people, including your students, are satisfied with television and plan to continue watching it. Although student watching does diminish considerably between the adolescent time of acquiring the driver's license and the part-time jobs to the more adult time of marriage, they do return to the TV set, still satisfied with the regular programming. And we know, through the various rating systems such as the Nielson Rating, that the majority of the population is satisfied with the present programming because of the high failure of the "better" programming to draw a paying audience. I would think, therefore, that a unit showing students what values are demonstrated on television (that they have already proven their preference for watching) would be more helpful for the students to explore than a vituperous diatribe against these "culturally unredeeming" programs or the head-in-the-sand attitude of ignoring these programs because the literary classics, if often boring and lacking in relevancy to most students, are, at least, socially redeeming to the teacher.

If you have any extra money to throw into your television unit, Pyramid Films sells and/or rents four films which can be helpful in introducing the values discussion. The first, TELEVISIONLAND, is a humorous look at the history of television (all 25 years) which can be a nostalgic trip for older viewers and a fast-moving recap of events of the past for younger fans. Milton Berle, Ed Sullivan, mingled with cigarette and coffee commercials featuring marching smokes and singing perks. But as the film moves forward the pace increases; the viewer doesn't know whether to laugh or cry as the introduction of McHALE'S NAVY is followed by early on-the-spot-reports of the Vietnam War. The ultimate message is that real and fictional events are so interrelated that the viewer never fully appreciates whether a situation is true or devised. The second film, THE ELECTRIC FLAG, shows the making of THE CANDIDATE (a full-length film showing a young man's progress to Senatorship in part caused by the influence of television) and the manipulation of news media about American's choice of political candidates for election. Do we vote for a candidate because he looks like Robert Redford and television creates a better picture of him than his opposition? Perhaps even the voters don't know. The technical aspect of television is shown in THE MAKING OF A LIVE TV SHOW, which follows the Emmy presentations a few years ago from inception to the final award. Responsibilities of the director, cameramen, talent--all of these are emphasized as well as the legs of the Golddiggers, a dancing group which is frequently shown in the film. The last one, a film that explodes on the mind in its superb expression of the power of media in possible future if not already present use, is SPECIAL TOUR. In this film a group of creatures from another planet are watching earth-like people walk backwards. The purpose of the film the creatures are watching is to show an experiment being

conducted which reverses the walking pattern to forward. Problem? No money to complete the re-training on all of the backward walkers, correcting that abnormality. The screen then asks these creatures watching to donate money to complete the re-training. When the creatures try to reject the request, they are bombarded with hypnotic media effects until they are actually happy to say yes.

But back to watching your own TV set for values. One place to begin is with the commercials, a discussion which could continue for days if you allow it. Students are fascinated with this art form and will talk about it incessantly. Of initial interest is the time spent watching commercials. Although many people use the time to get a sandwich, many watchers are too tired to move from in front of the picture tube. How many hours a day does the average person watch television commercials? During the 3 hours of prime time in the evening he sees approximately 7 minutes of commercials each hour. And double that time for daytime watching; fifteen minutes or 25% of each hour--all those mini-dramas, each illustrating a set of values, bombarding the senses. And what values does this person learn from the almost 100 commercials he sees each day? Women always dress attractively, usually in skirts, for any activity (usually within the confines of her household) whether she is scrubbing the floor, washing clothes, or performing the other functions of a clean, soap-filled household. Her marriage can always be threatened by problems such as "ring-around-the-collar" and bad coffee. And her attitude toward her husband should be subservient although he may act like a bumbling fool. All people are constantly in fear of diarrhea, constipation, hemorrhoids, body odor, bad breath, yellow teeth, dandruff, and the "heartbreak of Psoriasis." And happiness is created by the solutions to these problems. Oh, yes, neighbors have the right to comment on odors in the house, and mother-in-laws should point out spots on the glasses.

If you want to show 16mm commercials in the classroom, local television stations might give you copies of 16mm commercials that they no longer use on the air. Or you can write a company asking them for copies of their TV commercials for the products they advertise. Daytime TV, of course, is loaded with commercials, and a television set can be brought in just for this watching purpose. However you may choose to watch commercials, remind the students to find out what they are promised by the commercial, not what physical effects they will necessarily derive from the product but what they get emotionally--security, delight, excitement, a happy marriage, etc. Does the announcer really state the commercial's product is better than another product, or is the statement merely that the user might <u>like</u> the product better (a statement that is really not related to the product's quality). Other forms of deceptive language can be searched out also.

After the discussion of commercials, a discussion of other TV values can come easily such as prime time, that expensive three hours each evening that changes names and keeps content so consistent year after year. Out of 63 hours each week (including CBS, NBC, and ABC networks) over 20 hours are devoted to police people (both men and women) and detectives. One-third of prime time viewing each week concentrates on finding the bad guys so that good will triumph. Out of this situation might evolve a discussion of who our present heroes consist of. What are these heroes like and what is their attitude toward women? Even the two police women on the TV force, Christie and Pepper are protected by the stronger sex. And Fran (Ironside), although able to cope to a point, usually ends up with an assist from her male colleagues. No black male or Mexican is currently the hero of one of these series. The names are mostly fine Anglo-Saxon sounding ones, such as Cannon, Barnaby Jones, and Rockford. And they are so-o-o masculine. Another value to be considered is the methods these heroes are allowed to use to subvert evil: anything including murder, beatings, cheating, lying, whatever. Good must overcome evil no matter what action the hero takes to accomplish his ends. A discussion on this freedom to inforce of the TV cop and the actual restrictions placed upon the real cop could lead

to other value discussions. Or the real cop's rejection of the image portrayed by his TV counterpart which has long been a sore point in this country.

Along with this, each crime show has its gimmicks. Private eyes, for example, are fat or fatherly, or an ex-con, or maybe just a simple farmer called in to save a person or group from disaster. Whereas private eyes usually work alone, a police officer has either underlings, colleagues, or chiefs to work with (or against) so that the plot will be revealed to the audience. The idea of team work is strongly brought forth, and very few police shows dare to go against this value of people working together to combat the forces of crime.

Not surprising, the growth of the cop-detective shows have corresponded with the demise of the Western. With the swap of the gun from the hand of the western law enforcer to the hand of the city law enforcer, we changed locales but kept the same hero images. We now climb walls instead of mountains, descend sewers instead of arroyos, chase villains with cars instead of horses. But our heroes are still strong, brave, tough, and right, chasing, capturing, and killing as they always have. In this area, our values have not changed very much. But enough about that third of prime time TV. Another third is composed of movies, either pulled off the commercial market or designed specifically for television. Most "made for television" movies are merely extensions of present shows so that we watch the same things for two hours instead of one. Other movies are pilot shows for a possible new series and are usually, still an extension of present shows. And, of course, there are always the fad movies such as the present disaster type movie along with the resurrections based upon old series that dealt with horror, fantasy, and science fiction. In this category, only THE NIGHT STALKER is in a regular series.

The last third of prime time? This collection of remnants left over from past programming (2 westerns, 2 doctors, 1 lawyer, 1 teacher, 4 variety shows, and 14 sit-coms), along with a fascinating development in values--the nostalgia shows, is not only the most interesting lot of programming, but will probably be the easiest group in which to discuss values. First, there is the comparison of values because we still have the western, doctor, lawyer re-runs with us in daytime programming. One comparison could be the demise of the authority figure and the young-old partnership such as THE BOLD ONES and OWEN MARSHALL which have given way to the independent PETROCELLI. Or the great teacher image in LUCAS TANNER who defies authority (a woman principal) for what he believes is right. This same rejection of authority figures who teach and correct while saving the young is also prevalent in the detective and cop shows. Another most interesting discussion could be found for values in the new wave of nostalgia shows such as THE WALTONS, HAPPY DAYS, and LITTLE HOUSE ON THE PRAIRIE. These shows express a strong message for returning to the simple, quiet, family type of rural and small town living where values of honesty, work, and clean living are all important.

And last, but not least important, are the shows in which our changing values show the most--the situation comedy, especially in Norman Lear related productions, in which the onslaught of racism, sexism, politics, and many family problems are being dealt with for the first time on television. Only on the sit-coms do we find a representation of minority groups; half of these shows feature blacks and the issues surrounding them. Perhaps, with these sit-coms, we should ask such questions as, are they fair? Should these ethnic jokes be made? Some people feel not, but the question is what are these shows really saying? What attitudes and values do we get from them? Do the satiric, racial slurs merely reinforce existing prejudices or are they making things worse?

Getting these prime time TV shows into your classroom need not be a problem as there are ways. One way is to assign certain shows at night as homework. But,

rather than one specific show, make it a choice from one of several in a group such as Norman Lear sit-coms or detective shows. This way time is not so critical and the similarities of values that will arise from a discussion of the different shows that the students will watch is most amazing. The key to this kind of assignment is to have several general questions on values that are relevant to different categories so that the student can look for the answers as he watches. Another way to get these shows into the classroom is to video-tape or film and tape from your TV set 2-3 minute excerpts of shows in the same category. Several shows taped or filmed in this manner will give the student plenty of material for classroom discussions.

Possibly, bringing in a regular TV set to the classroom is the easiest way to analyze TV. Daytime TV has plenty of re-runs, games, soap operas, and commercials for any classroom hour. Soap operas are a world of their own with typical middle-class views on pre-marital sex, divorce, abortion, women's roles, and family relationships. They feature an almost totally white, nice-home, professional job existence (half the men seem to be doctors as well as many of the women). One show, however, is making feeble attempts to escape the pattern, and it might be worth watching. HOW TO SURVIVE A MARRIAGE indicates a slightly more realistic view of the typical home situations and everyday problems. People are actually poor (although they still have lovely houses), and married couples really sleep together.

As frequent as the soap operas are the game shows. What values are these teaching? The most obvious behavior seen are the grasping greedy individuals (LET'S MAKE A DEAL) who are willing to do anything for money. The rags to riches promises of getting something for nothing is inherent in the prizes promised. A value, I think, worth discussing.

Even though many of the comments made in the above discussion were negative, this article is not meant as an indictment against TV values, but is meant, rather, as a warning to educators that we must help students to take a good look at this amazing phenomena in their lives. Our students do and will continue watching television. And, as it is the greatest learning force in their lives, we must not only teach them about what they are watching, we must also help students to learn to analyze TV's manipulative power and how to combat it. Television has had more influence than schools in training students in various lifestyles; dress, hair styles, social behavior, speech patterns, attitudes about sex, marriage, war, professions, etc., which are also values. The speed by which fads now travel from coast to coast is another indication of the power of TV.

It is to this end that I also commend many educators as our educational system, generally speaking, (even though it is in its usual state of being fifty years behind) is beginning to develop curriculum and technical means for getting the media into the classroom. Not only are we beginning to recognize that the teaching of TV values is important, even more, it is fun. Perhaps, even, one day, with the help of media, most learning will be fun. What a way to teach!!!

COMIC BOOKS AND THE ENGLISH TEACHER

Francis E. Kazemek, Carbondale, Illinois

The comic book is no longer the "bad boy" of the mass media. The furor, legitimate and hysterically otherwise, unleashed upon the comic book industry by critics, parents, and educators in the 1950s has long since abated. The Comics Code of 1954 placated an aroused public. Television now receives the legitimate critical attention once reserved for the comic book and, likewise, the often unwarranted condemnation.

Some of the "superhero" comic books which have evolved since the early 1960s have recently been the subject of numerous articles, histories, critical literary essays, and psychological interpretations. Some universities have even begun to offer courses dealing with the comic book, e.g. Bowling Green State University, while others are establishing special collections of comic books in their libraries, e.g. Northwestern University.

Moreover, comic book sales continue to rise; especially within the last few years, sales have increased at an amazing rate. The 1974 AYER DIRECTORY OF PUBLICATIONS indicates that the six comic book publishers reporting circulation figures have a combined monthly circulation figure of over 38 million copies. What is even more astonishing than these figures is the fact that there has been very little educational research conducted on the theme and content of the contemporary comic book. This lack of research or research which is based upon inadequate knowledge of the medium as it exists today, is glaringly evident to anyone who is even vaguely familiar with the comic books on the market today. The comic books which have evolved since the mid-1960s are drastically different than their predecessors of the 1940s, 1950s, and early 1960s. This is especially true of the superhero comic books published by the Marvel Comics Group and DC Comics (the two largest publishers in the field).

Educators, librarians, and parents can no longer rely upon the old beliefs and concepts concerning comic books; they can no longer depend upon the old standards with which to evaluate comic books. They must re-examine and re-evaluate the comic books that young people (and older, "educated" people!) are reading today. A new, imaginative approach which recognizes this mass medium to be a "legitimate" and enduring (almost forty years old) form of popular art and deals with it as such is necessary. An approach which views all comic books as a form of "trash," accompanied by a fixation upon instances of sex and/or violence in the comic books, is one which assuredly will fail to comprehend and deal effectively with the comic books of the 1970s.

In a recent research project, the author examined 100 superhero comic book stories of the 1970s and 100 superhero comic book stories of the 1950s and early 1960s. He discovered that the contemporary comic books dealt with reality in a much more sociological sophisticated and psychologically complex manner than the older comic books. Aside from the fantastic adventures, super-battles, and universe-shaking confrontations of the most apocalyptic nature which, of course, are their raison de'etre as an entertainment-oriented medium, the contemporary superhero comic books also displayed a "nowness" which appeals to the reader's interest in or knowledge of contemporary events, issues, and problems of both a social and personal nature. This "nowness" and relatively undistorted image of reality presented in the contemporary superhero comic books can be discussed with regard to four main areas.

1. SETTING

The action in the contemporary superhero comic book stories takes place in a world that reflects the actual reality of American society. The physical settings of the stories, for the most part, mirror urban America with all of its problems: crime, ghettoes, etc. The psychological settings of the stories, for the most part, reflect

the complexity and ambiguity of most of the major, vital problems that confront mankind today; there are no "right" or "wrong" answers; there are no easy solutions.

The older superhero comic books, on the other hand, although almost all of the action takes place on earth, present physical settings which have no counterparts in reality; they are either painted backdrops or reflect the wished-for world of the "American Dream" which never was and, probably, never will be. The psychological settings of the stories, likewise, have no relation to reality. The important concerns and problems of mankind are presented as being amenable to simple, readily-available answers. These easy, black/white solutions reflect the impractical and unrealistic world of the ideologue rather than the world of twentieth-century man.

2. THE CHARACTERS

The contemporary superhero comic books attempt to present characters who reflect the racial-ethnic and cultural heterogeneity of society; blacks, whites, American Indians, rich men, poor men, "radicals," "hippies," "squares," right-wingers, left-wingers, corrupt politicians, honest government officials, etc. can all be found in today's superhero comic books. Moreover, an attempt is made, for the most part, to portray these characters in a non-stereotypical manner. Good and evil are not antithetical absolutes; they can be found, in varying degrees and ways, in most men. There are very few angels or devils on earth.

The characters presented in the older superhero comic books, however, are almost always stereotypical representations rather than unique individuals. They live in a white, middle-class world where good men and evil men can be isolated and dealt with accordingly.

3. THE SUPERHEROES

The superhero portrayed in the contemporary superhero comic book is no longer a demigod above the problems of lesser mortals. He is first and foremost a human being burdened with all of the personal and social problems that affect most men today. He can be, and is, vain, petty, cruel, insensitive, and vengeful; he can be, and is, unselfish, forgiving, compassionate, loving, and willing to risk his life for others. He is a man. He is a superhero secondarily.

The superhero's actions most often result in only tentative solutions. This is especially true in those cases (most of them) when he confronts super-beings whose powers are equal to or far greater than his own. Moreover, most of his confrontations are with super-beings who are motivated by a lust for absolute power of some sort. This desire for power has a much deeper psychological and philosophical depth than the simple desire for and pursuit of money.

The superhero portrayed in the older comic books, on the other hand, is the epitome of goodness and self-effacement. He exists to serve. He is not plagued with the pressures, problems, and conflicting desires that trouble most men. As a SUPER man, he is above such human concerns. He is able to solve problems in an absolute manner. He most often has to deal with simple creatures who are solely concerned with dollars and jewels. His utter self-righteousness and isolation from the realities of human existence make him an object of contempt for most of his foes. And rightly so.

4. THE UNDERLYING THEMES AND "MESSAGE"

"Literary" and "social" themes abound for the imaginative language arts or social studies teacher. They are sure to arouse the interest of even the most bored or recalcitrant student. CAPTAIN AMERICA, for example, during the Watergate affair, forsook, in disgust and disillusionment, his superhero identity (a stars-and-stripes outfit that makes him the apotheosis of all that the America of history textbooks stands for) because he did not want to represent the Watergate version of America. Recently in

THE FANTASTIC FOUR, a super-chauvinist named Mahkizmo from the Planet Machus battled a representative of the giant Femizons. THE INCREDIBLE HULK is a brilliant nuclear scientist whose aggressive id literally takes control all too often and transforms him into a green brute force that smashes anything or anyone standing in its way. He is relentlessly tracked by an army general whose monomaniac pursuit reminds one of Captain Ahab's hunt for Moby-Dick. THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN is a Hamlet of a young man whose arachnoid abilities only help to increase his insecurity, doubts, and paranoia. In one recent adventure he had to combat a hideous individual with an over-sized brain (the sort of person Blake calls the "other face," the different member of society) who fed on the minds and emotions of others because he could not bear being isolated and alone. This story conveyed the alienation and suicidal loneliness of the individual in an overwhelmingly impersonal and hostile society with a power and pathos that would startle even the most sophisticated reader.

The underlying "message" of the contemporary superhero comic book stories is usually that of reaffirming the complexity and potentiality of human existence. Men are presented as myriad-faceted beings; the society they construct is, likewise, a place of infinite possibilities. Absolute solutions to problems, ultimate "victories," are seldom, if ever, possible in such a world. A tentative, imaginative approach toward life is stressed in the stories.

The underlying "message" of the older superhero comic book stories, however, is usually one which maintains that ultimate answers to difficult and complex problems can readily be arrived at. Good will always wins out and "happy endings" will abound as long as men do the "right thing."

Concern for the personal and social problems of modern man, skillfully incorporated into the fantastic adventures and stories of cataclysmic confrontations between super-beings of the most wildly imaginative kind, may help to explain the increasing sales and rising in popularity of comic books amongst individuals of varying age levels.

If contemporary superhero comic books are popular because of their blend of fantasy and reality, then they ought to be examined by educators, especially language arts teachers, in order to discover how this mixture works. In addition to being a valuable learning material, comic books may also offer educators additional insights into the problem of how to "turn on" students to learning.

Give comic books a chance. Bring them into the classroom. I promise you that you won't be disappointed!

GLEANINGS FROM POPULAR CULTURE JOURNALS

One of the standard ways of getting students to notice the artifacts and materials of popular culture surrounding them and influencing them is to ask them to keep a journal with entries for several weeks, each entry to be an observation about some facet of popular culture or an observation about the impact of popular culture. I've asked my students to do this for a couple of years now, and the entries below are not meant to be developed essays but rather germs of essays waiting to be written.

"The popularity of "bumper-stickers" indicates to us how lonely and depersonalized life is in a crowded and alienating city. Each person, tied to his life of ripping down the freeway in his big or little automobile, is trying to add a little humanity to a cold and impersonal world by slogans" 'Have a happy day;' 'Honk if you love Jesus;' 'Smile, God loves you;' 'Streakers have more fun.' All such slogans seem to say something to the other anonymous drivers as they press to and from their work with their worries, alone on the concrete freeways." (Chris Rohs)

"Censorship: recently the BBC ran a documentary report on 'sex and the Fourteen Year Old.' The program was scheduled quite late at night, after most fourteen-year-olds would be in bed, because the subject matter was thought to be too mature for adolescents!" (Ann Campbell)

"Although I've terminated my blissful credit-America relationship with Shell Oil Co., my fascination with its image remains: glaring yellow fan-shell on the bright red background towering in neon brilliance over its neon neighbors. Shell stations are ubiquitous, like Coca-Cola. And I'm sure they've worked hard and expensively to perpetuate their prominence in a world littered with gasoline competitors at every corner. What motivated their choice of name--SHELL--with the broad, umbrella-like shell as its symbol? An advertising enigma to the peon public peasant. The color selection is easily deduced. Though not an aesthete's dream, the primary colors, yellow on red, are impossible to miss. There's a comforting sense of sameness, too. One Shell station is pretty much guaranteed to be a mirror image of the year's model station. If not, it will be hastily renovated so as not to jar the motorist with an unwonted individuality." (Rebecca Deyo)

"Got up today and watched my two soap operas, "All My Children," and "The Young and the Restless," before school. My goodness, soap operas seem to have less and less soap in them every time I turn them on! X-rated morning TV?" (Sue Madsen)

"Did you every wonder who invented the toothbrush?--I have. We've glorified it, necessitated it, electrified it and color-coded it, but never any mention of who deserves the credit for its invention. Whoever he is, he's an unsung hero."(Jeff Paisley)

"John Wayne on two channels on the same night! What planning! What a decision! I understand that women, in spite of the lib movement, have a hero image of Wayne as much as men do. He has certainly capitalized on the western hero mystique as much as any performer. Autry and Rogers pulled up reins, but Wayne in his old age never is more alive than in the last ten years as a developer of the mythology." (Bruce Richardson)

"Baskin-Robbins, on Sunday or any other day for that matter, seems to be the common meeting ground for people of all ages. Where else can you let your imagination run wild, along with your waistline, and order three scoops of ice cream, each a different flavor? B-R seems to be the one place where all ages can mingle freely without age consciousness. Maybe ice cream can help bridge the generation gap." (Sue Stanford)

"Eric Von Daniken, in my opinion, ought to be nominated for the Hugo award

for science fiction. A very judicious selection, I must say. Here we have an example of 'pop' anthropology in its purest form. By seeing what his audience wants to hear (about earlier cultures), he sells books and TV scripts--definitely a Madison Ave. job." (Mike Elliott)

"Having read in the newspaper an article on the latest fad--scratch and sniff T-shirts--my mind starts to conjure up all the immediate and not-so-immediate ramifications. The initial designs are limited to fruits, alcohol and pizza with the corresponding smells. What possibilities!!! Eventually, there will be three-course meals, deodorants, flowers, blood, manure (why not human feces?) and perhaps the ultimate--a picture of an American flag. When you scratch it, however, you can instantly savor mom's freshly baked apple pie. And who say the tumbrils of American progress aren't rolling on?" (Dick Drezen)

"The most fun of Comic Book class is the way the 'lower' kids have now become authorities. They know much more than the "smart" kids and even the teacher. They really revel in being superior--at least for once in their lives." (Saundra Harmon)

"I just saw a news item about a man who had served 35 years in prison for killing a man in an argument over $1.65 (the American puritan idea of pride and frugality). When asked what the first thing was that he wanted to do upon release, he said he wanted to buy a new car: 'I've seen them and they are Nice.' The American dream." (Jeff Paisley)

"The double standard our TV censors live with is truly amazing. One only has to view the mutilated, lacerated TV presentation of IN COLD BLOOD to learn about the startling new discoveries on the commercial market--Fresh N', the moist towel which keeps you cleaner than toilet paper. Or how about the new douche, women have found to be even better than before? Now that my friends, is <u>cleaner</u> family entertainment!" (Todd Pollack)

"It seems that the matchbook is the great leveler of society. Not only does it serve its primary function, but the matchbook levels a table leg or a chair leg. Too bad the economy can't be leveled as easily." (Sue Stanford)

"Holiday Inns, READER'S DIGEST, and Alka Seltzer probably reflect the values of middle class culture more than any other artifact. Holiday Inns are in every city in the U.S. painted in bright happy colors and mass produced. READERS DIGEST has summaries of interesting family oriented articles. They are excellent for the majority of Americans who are not only conservative, but always in a hurry. Finally, Alka Seltzers are what the Americans must take after eating in a Holiday Inn or digesting any one of the saccharine articles in READERS DIGEST." (Sue Milner)

"Plastic credit cards. America's new money, vehicles to the 'good life.' 'What! No credit cards? Then I won't take your money.' 'You mean you're not in debt?' Then you can't be a very good credit risk!' Convenient little cards. The pride in acquisition of that first credit card, entrance into the adult world. Items so easily, painlessly acquired. Increasing limits, increasing debts. Entrapment. Awareness--too late? Are you strong enough to kick the habit? Best not to start--but no one can tell you. It's the American way!" (Rebecca Deyo)

MARCHING TO MANY DRUMMERS

Pearl G. Aldrich, Frostburg State College, Frostburg, Maryland

True democratization and an egalitarian approach to literature can take place in English classrooms when the study of popular culture, via television drama, current films, and popular novels, is incorporated into the traditional curriculum. However, many English teachers, educated in the liberal arts tradition, are reluctant to dignify superficial and transient works by serious study for several reasons. Among them are the sheer bulk of high quality literature already available, that students will be prevented from experiencing the classics, and that we will not fulfill our responsibility to pass on our rich literary heritage to the next generation if we take up all our class time discussing last night's episode of KOJAK. I can only cry, "True! True!" to such reasons and many more. At the same time, what are we to do about other equally compelling truths such as our obligation to teach all students by not only recognizing, but acting upon our knowledge of their individual differences? It is also true that forced feeding of the classics to the neglect of major ingredients contributing to students' developing sensibilities does not inevitably lead to appreciation of literary value.

However, there is a way to resolve this paradox. What to teach need not be an either/or choice between the temporarily popular and the enduring classic. We can make the best of all possible worlds of literature by the following means: We can teach the fundamental relationship between popular writing and literature so that students can see what roots led to which flowers. We can accomplish this by shifting evaluation of prose and poetry from a vertical, good-to-bad, continuum to a horizontal, simple-to-complex, continuum. This offers students the opportunity to make valid judgments based upon non-pejorative criteria. These criteria in students' hands are tools for individual discovery. By asking students to use them, we remove ourselves from the onerous position of saying, in effect, whether we intend it or not, "What you like is bad. What I like is good."

Identifying the relationship between popular writing and literature can best be done by identifying the main difference--complexity, a complexity of ideas, characterization, symbol, and language that is achieved, or not achieved, by the working of the author's talent. The ingredients of all drama, novels, short stories, and poetry are the same, all elements of the human experience. The author, therefore, puts theme and character, event and setting, language and symbol, through his or her transforming talent according to an inner artistic vision. The result, in terms of literary value, depends upon the author's talent. From the hands of great talent, whether he or she intends it, come masterpieces of enduring literature. From the hands of lesser talents come the popular cannon. The greater the author's talent, the more complex the work. The works in the popular cannon are usually simpler in theme, characterization, symbol, event, setting, and language.

The criteria for judgment, the tools for the students' use, are the following definitions: Simple fiction and simple poetry reinforce the ideals of the system of values and beliefs generally held in the author's time. These ideals include ideal justice, ideal sacrifice, ideal love, ideal morals, ideal personal relationships, ideal ambitions; in short, the ideal life come true. At the other extreme of the continuum, complex writing questions the values and beliefs generally held in the author's time.

Simple fictions provide their readers, and now viewers, with a means of making their dreams come true. To accomplish this purpose, simple fiction employs a God-like figure or group to overcome opposition or to do the "right" thing. The opposition is usually entrenched in the Establishment of its time, which purports to operate on contemporary ideals, but does not. The God-like figure or group, therefore,

must oppose the Establishment for society's greater good and frequently gives up "success" in contemporary terms to accomplish the purposes of the fiction. Complex fictions, on the other hand, deal with long-range philosophical and universal problems of life for which there are no clear-cut solutions. The reader/viewer leaves fictional work with ideas to debate, themes to unravel, complexities of character to discuss, symbols to identify. Obviously, reading or watching a simple fiction is far easier than dealing with a complex fiction.

All fictions both simple and complex, as well as those that fall somewhere along the line of the continuum, are based on abstract ideas of good and bad, justice and injustice, love and hate, and all the others. The difference is in their complexity. Simple fiction deals with one idea at a time, while complex fiction interweaves several ideas into the actions of the characters and events of the plot. Between the two extremes, where the majority of works fall, lies the most profitable area for study--the fictions, in any form, that combine elements of both simple and complex writing. For example, the underlying idea of a television drama might be a complex philosophical one, such as the moral responsibility of a citizen, but its resolution could be simple--a fight, a chase, and all things turn up roses. Or a character of a novel might be complex, but at the end, is made into a God-like figure in order to resolve the plot.

There are major differences in the use of language between simple and complex writing, particularly poetry. Does the author use one word or one phrase for several meanings or does he/she stick to one meaning per word? What vocabulary is used, for example, in a song lyric? Is it the language of the drug scene, contemporary slang, or every day, kitchen-type vocabulary? What vocabulary is used in dialogue in television drama? In prime time detective and crime drama, you hear the vocabulary of police procedure, some legal language, some street slang, while in the soap operas in the afternoons, the vocabulary of popular psychology predominates. Some aspects of Black dialect, particularly those slang terms that can be used for a general audience, have been used in films and on television. The popular media is particularly rich in specialized vocabularies, with wide ranges of connotations, which we can hardly afford to ignore.

Comparison is the key to using the horizontal continuum to discuss and evaluate fictions. I have deliberately not mentioned specific examples because, every few months, something new comes along. Remember how quickly LOVE STORY came and went? Then THE GODFATHER, followed by THE EXORCIST? It seems a hundred years ago that A PATCH OF BLUE was being handed from one student to another. I usually set the discussion according to student choice. Whatever popular novel a student wishes to read can be compared with the novel the class reads in common, or the student can place a novel on the continuum and support his decision by evidence from the book. Accordingly, I have had students rate the same book on opposite sides of the continuum and supply valid reasons for each decision. Student choice in television or film drama can be utilized in the same fashion. If a television drama is assigned, most students will watch it. To discuss the ingredients of a television series, I ask students to take notes from three consecutive episodes of their favorite series and answer questions derived from the definitions of the continuum.

Because of the presence of a God-like figure or group in television series, they all fall closer to the simple end of the continuum than to the complex, yet they are not all foolishly simple. They are generally based on complex problems that are resolved by simple solutions in order to work out the phantasy, dream-come-true aspect. Therefore the following questions are useful in discussing the series dramas: What is the underlying philosophy of this series? What aspects of our general culture does this philosophy challenge or reinforce? What are the hero's or heroine's major character traits? From the hero's and heroine's consistent actions in each episode, what behavior is acceptable? What unacceptable? What are the rewards for the hero/heroine's acceptable behavior? What do the answers to these questions convey about cultural ideas?

An added dimension to the study of television drama series is to show their relation to the hero myth found in every culture. Hero myths are basically simplistic, but we have not stopped studying them in literature because of this characteristic. We all know BEOWULF, GAWAIN AND THE GREEN KNIGHT, King Arthur, Roland, and many others. Heroes, who are God-like characters, seem necessary to all people for several reasons. They represent the ideal person in a culture who acts as a source of pride and emulation, who exhibits the traits admired in their time, and who overcomes all opposition and injustice. Who the hero is, where he or she comes from, what ideals each fights for, and what obstacles are overcome depend upon the elements of each culture. We all know that Beowulf was a great swimmer and a great warrior who saved the people from the dangers of their life, such as death by monsters like Grendel and his mother. What do heroes in the today's popular culture do? They drive cars expertly, shoot accurately, and save people from death at the hands of twentieth century monsters--robbers, murderers, crooked politicians, Mafia hit men, crooked cops. It's no accident that the detectives and law enforcement officers have become God-like figures in a technological society where crime is prevalent and the majority are helpless in the face of the criminal politician and big businessman. For the members of an industrial society who are the powerless victims of repeated criminal assaults, the need for ideal police as heroes to fulfill a fantasy of protection and revenge is overwhelming. And that need is being fulfilled nightly on television and in the films. As teachers, we must incorporate such highly influential media into our curriculum.

An interesting spin-off of using the horizontal, simple-to-complex, continuum for evaluative purposes is what it reveals about works by the same author. It shows that they are not all equal, however much veneration we show them because of the high quality of their best work. Two familiar examples will suffice here--Shakespeare and George Eliot. If we were to evaluate THE MERCHANT OF VENICE, for example, according to the criteria of the continuum, we would find that Shakespeare reinforced the values and beliefs of his time by destroying Shylock and providing all rewards to the nobles and their ladies. In addition, Portia is drawn as a God-like figure who overcame all obstacles for the greater good of her society, then re-assumed her proper, womanly and subordinate position. If we are to believe that this play was inspired by the uproar caused when Queen Elizabeth's Jewish physician was made the scapegoat of an assassination plot, then we must also believe that the play was exploitive, designed to feed upon popular emotions and reinforce the status quo. However, there are KING LEAR, OTHELLO, and HAMLET, with different answers when we apply the definitions of the continuum. What, then, is popular culture and what is literature? Where do they part company? But more important, need they part?

Remember SILAS MARNER and ADAM BEDE? In their own day, they were popular novels, yet they are, in the main, simplistic, complete with God-like figures to overcome all obstacles to achieve the ideal moral stature of George Eliot's time. It's no wonder MIDDLEMARCH, a highly complex novel, sold poorly in the same day and book reviewers said it lacked sadly the high moral qualities of Eliot's earlier books. MARNER and BEDE would be placed on the simple side of the simple-to-complex continuum; MIDDLEMARCH, on the complex side, yet all three are the work of the same person whose great talent developed practically in public with each successive novel. As those talents gained in complexity, so did her fiction. There's no way we can deny their place in both popular culture of their day and that designated literature today.

At first the simple-to-complex theory of literary evaluation might appear as a leveling process, a reduction of great literature and an elevation of mediocre writing to literary quality. However, this is not so. If anything, using the continuum reinforces literary quality by identifying its complexities, but it does not

denigrate popular works read and viewed by millions by refusing to consider them. Nor is this method of study one that has as a hidden goal the eventual rejection of popular culture because, obviously, the complex is the better work. It may be, but our personal tastes through life incorporate examples from along the whole continuum. The major differences between you and me and our adolescent students is that we have a wider background, greater choice, and know our purposes when we choose each experience. The most important aspects of using the horizontal rather than the vertical, good-to-bad, method of study are bringing popular culture and popular art into the Englich classroom and providing students with opportunities to make their own judgments according to non-pejorative criteria. This method also puts experiences in English classrooms into the mainstream of students' lives and gives them a foundation upon which to build evaluative skills.

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SHOPTALK:

"In 1960 at Atlantic City, dazzling Nancy Fleming told Bert Parks 'a woman's place is in the home,' showed off her sewing, then went on to be crowned 'Miss America.' She was queen of the country's beauties.

Now--two children and a divorce later--television talk show hostess Nancy Fleming says the pageant which thrust her into the nation's eye perpetuates an outmoded concept of women.

'Miss America is not a real person,' she said in a recent interview. 'She's something that happens every year.'

Contestants are very unlikely to open up to Bert Parks about today's 'new morality,' she said. 'When they're contestants, they always come on as very right-wing politically, and for God, the flag and apple pie.'

Aspiring young beauty queens still write her asking how to win the crown at Atlantic City and she tells them to think about the years after the pageant. 'I just can't think of anything more depressing than feeling that the Miss America pageant was the high point of your life.'" ("Former Miss America Puts Down the Pageant," LOS ANGELES TIMES, Feb. 9, 1975, p. I-8)

If you've ever been gripped by the madness of writing on a roller coaster, you might be interested in Robert Cartmell's "The Quest for the Ultimate Roller Coaster," NY TIMES, June 9, 1974, "Travel and Resorts" section, pp. 1, 18-19. Cartmell's essay covers the thrill of the roller coaster madness and lists his "top ten" roller coasters: "The Thunderbolt" at Kennywood Park in Pennsylvania, "The Racer" at Chapultepec Park in Mexico City, "The Cyclone" in Coney Island, "The Great American Scream Machine" at Six Flags Over Georgia Park near Atlanta, "The Giant Coaster" in Paragon Park south of Boston, "The Giant Dipper" at Santa Cruz south of San Francisco, "The Racer" at King's Island Park northeast of Cincinnati, "The Coaster" at Dorney Park in Allentown, Pennsylvania, "The Comet" at Crystal Beach Park on the Ontario side of Lake Erie, and "The Cyclone" at Lakeside Park in northwest Denver. Another article on roller coasters is John Pastier's "Taking the Plunge on California's Last Big Ride," LOS ANGELES TIMES, Sept. 1, 1974, "Calendar" section, p. 1, 67.

AMERICAN BEST SELLERS AS AN ENGLISH ELECTIVE

Madelon McGowan, Point Loma High School, San Diego

We're always on the prowl for new electives at Point Loma High School. We offer semester-long electives to classes composed of both juniors and seniors, and we feel obligated not only to meet students' skills needs in these classes, but to recognize them as "consumers" with specific interests of their own. Often, therefore, we poll students for their ideas of what might prove to be a "fun course" in English. Lately, we've been especially interested in offering more electives which feature or stress American literature, since a semester's work in that area is a district requirement for each student. Last year, after all English classes had brainstormed for possible American Literature courses (we also consulted sophomores, by the way, since they would be eligible to take the course as juniors this year) they submitted a list of about ten course titles. All students then voted on the most desired choices after we had made certain that teachers would be willing (and able) to handle any course specified; no use offering a course and finding later that no one wanted to teach it! American Best Sellers and one other elective won by a landslide, and we hastened to apply through district channels for permission to offer the courses experimentally.

American Best Sellers has proved to be very popular. Our initial experimental class contained thirty-four students; enrollment for this spring has almost tripled. The key to the course's popularity, we believe, is in its currency and in the freedom of choice given within the class to each individual.

Titles chosen for use in this course are taken from the WORLD ALMANAC, which each year lists twenty fiction and twenty non-fiction books classified as "best sellers." The earliest publication we've used so far had been a best seller in 1906, THE JUNGLE. Most of the titles, however, come from lists compiled within the last seven years. The first class began with a collection of over forty titles. We ordered no more than ten copies of each (sometimes as few as three or five) in order to conform to a district policy which limits the number of copies of titles not on the "approved" list. We insisted on paperback editions--they're cheaper and more attractive. (Besides, a best seller is more likely to be published in paperback very soon after the hardback has begun to sell well). Our first order list gives some idea of the variety and quality of the books:

*THE GOOD EARTH
LIFE WITH FATHER
GONE WITH THE WIND
DRUMS ALONG THE MOHAWK
NORTHWEST PASSAGE
REBECCA
GRAPES OF WRATH
THE ROBE
A TREE GROWS IN BROOKLYN
BLACK BOY
THE FOXES OF HARROW
THE NAKED AND THE DEAD
FROM HERE TO ETERNITY
THE CAINE MUTINY
THE SILVER CHALICE
EXODUS
*THE GODFATHER
ANDROMEDA STRAIN
*SLAUGHTERHOUSE FIVE
*THE PETER PRINCIPLE
*BURY MY HEART AT WOUNDED KNEE
*THE BELL JAR
*THE DRIFTERS
*THE JUNGLE
*HAWAII
TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD
FAIL-SAFE
SHOES OF THE FISHERMAN
UP THE DOWN STAIRCASE
*THE FIXER
*IN COLD BLOOD
GAMES PEOPLE PLAY
*HOTEL
THE VIRGINIAN
*ROSEMARY'S BABY
*FIVE SMOOTH STONES
THE NAKED APE
*ELECTRIC KOOL-AID ACID TEST
CONFESSIONS OF NAT TURNER
CHRISTY
*ZELDA
THE FRENCH LIEUTENANT'S WOMAN
FUTURE SHOCK
TRUE GRIT
BODY LANGUAGE
*DAY OF THE JACKAL

*DELIVERANCE THE AGE OF INNOCENCE

*These seemed to receive more use than others.

This spring, we have added a number of titles now gaining popularity, such as THE LEVANTER, THE EXORCIST, PAPER MOON, JOURNEY TO IXTLAN, TERMINAL MAN, THE ODESSA FILE, I'M OKAY, YOU'RE OKAY, AIRPORT, and THE HOLLOW HILLS. Some of these choices were made because we noticed students reading them on their own; some we chose because they are second or third works by a currently widely-read author (we're ordering more titles by Vonnegut, for example); some we simply pulled from the best seller lists as we had the first time out. We have experienced an upsurge of interest in Tolkien's work, so we ordered THE HOBBIT and THE LORD OF THE RINGS trilogy as well.

So the kid who walks into the Best Sellers class has quite a variety of material from which to choose! His only limitations are his own interests (which in many cases we hope to broaden as the semester goes on), his judgment of his reading capacity, and the time he has to devote to reading. Most of the students are, at first, repelled by the size of many best sellers (GONE WITH THE WIND, THE NAKED AND THE DEAD, HAWAII) so the first books they check out are more likely to be ones like FAIL-SAFE, or THE BELL JAR. Though the students have usually signed up because of an interest in current fiction (which predominates in the list above), they soon find themselves engrossed in non-fiction: BODY LANGUAGE, THE PETER PRINCIPLE, THE PETER PRESCRIPTION, THE GAMES PEOPLE PLAY, and I'M OKAY, YOU'RE OKAY.

The number of books read during the course depends on the length of each work and the student's own reading ability. Each one keeps a record of his reading on 3 X 5 cards; here he notes the essential information about the book and the highlights or main ideas that are memorable to him. He also jots down some educated guesses as to why this particular book has become a best seller. This way of keeping track is virtually painless and helps to overcome the dread of accounting for each book with yet another written "book report" in his career.

Naturally, each person does render a more detailed accounting of some of his reading. One of the most effective is a dialogue between two people who've just read the same book (sometimes, one of these is the teacher!). This is a lively way of reviewing a book, in the true sense of the term. Through this method, many titles become sought-after; the best "ad" for a book is, after all, someone else's enthusiastic recommendation. If the two readers disagree, the talk becomes more animated, usually, and the discussion can extend over several meetings. We feel that talking about books is one of the most stimulating things that can happen in an English class. We find that most students have pertinent things to say. The more they indulge in this activity, the more confidence they have in their own opinions and the more logically they seem to support their contentions.

Best Sellers, as with all the electives, is a heterogeneous class; anyone is eligible to join. Sometimes, a "reluctant" or indifferent reader can receive help in this climate from more eager or successful readers. A book's "promoters" often help to dispel the fear of its length. For example, if one student has been "turned off" by the lengthy and detailed section of HAWAII, he may get this kind of advice on how to reach the heart of the book fast from someone who's already read it: "Start with the section about the Tahitians. (Here, I'll show you the place). You can come back and pick up the first section later. But the story really starts here!"

Is he having trouble "getting into" FUTURE SHOCK? "Start with Part III; it's sort of all together from there on. You can read I and II afterwards if you want more details about what Toffler's saying."

It's evident that the teacher doesn't have to recommend, bribe, cajole, or threaten--the students take care of the interest factor, and the books keep moving

from hand to hand.

Some titles, of course, are neglected completely or have only one "taker." For the first class these were THE SILVER CHALICE, CIMARRON, EXODUS, and BLACK BOY. This spring, though, tastes may change with the new groups--who can say?

Students have two major assignments during the semester: a project based on one book and an essay which compares two other books. Projects are as varied as the people who create them. Usually, the teacher suggests some possibilities, then lets the students work out their own ideas. Many people work on these in small groups. Some sample projects which originated with students:

for UP THE DOWN STAIRCASE - a compilation of student-written bulletin notices using the names of teachers and students at Point Loma;

a novel involving a romantic situation - a marriage counselor's case history of the situation, complete with a solution of the problem(s);

Vonnegut's books
- a "Dictionary of Boko Noman," using his special words and phrases with "translations";
- a tracing of one character who reappears in several of the novels (Kilgore Trout, Eliot Rosewater, Betty Pilgrim).

Others, which may apply to either fiction or non-fiction and originated with both teacher and students are

1. Is there a complicated family structure? Construct a genealogy chart or family tree from evidence offered in the course of the novel.
2. Are any real names mentioned in the novel? If so, research to discover their basic philosophies and positions in their age. Are they influential today? How? Where? Were they liberals espousing change? What did they advocate?
3. From the author's descriptions of places, buildings, or residences, are there any that could be drawn, sketched, or made into a mural, wool/felt/crewel tapestry, or macrame design?
4. Rewrite a humorous or dramatic scene as a play. Perform it live or on film/tape.
5. Are there contrasting characters? Discuss their differences and/or similarities.
6. Who is the pivotal character? How does he function as a catalytic agent precipitating action, influencing more mature understandings by the end?
7. Draw, paint, or make caricatures of interesting or humorous characters as you see them from the writer's descriptions. Write thumbnail sketches to reinforce your interpretations.
8. What is the author criticizing? Discuss his viewpoint and his evidence for it? (GAMES PEOPLE PLAY, I'M OKAY, YOU'RE OKAY, and PETER PRINCIPLE were used extensively for this project).
9. Write another chapter assuming one year has passed. In what situations do you now find the characters? Have they learned from their experiences and improved their lot? Have relationships changed?
10. Are there any characters with peculiar eccentricities? If so, write a two-minute monologue which will convey them.
11. Try your hand as an author. Write a short story based on one of the books you read from three points of view--Omniscient, Hidden, and Interior. Keep the number of characters and events to a minimum.
12. Does the main character make a journey? If so, draw a map of it, with arrows and labels to indicate the location of major events. (DOVE is a good book for this one).
13. Retell an important event, or depict a specific situation or problem through a series of cartoon drawings.
14. Can you construct a game or model (or whatever) from the book? (How about

THE GODFATHER, or THE GAMES PEOPLE PLAY, or BODY LANGUAGE?)

15. Write a parody, using a subject you think needs criticizing. In your parody follow the style of the author of your book.

Some groups or individuals combined two books for a project. One pair set out to explore this problem: How did Scarlett O'Hara use body language? The result was a demonstration of various flirting (aggressive!) techniques performed for the whole class. THE GAMES PEOPLE PLAY also offered numerous opportunities for demonstration, as you can well imagine!

The assigned long essay, as we all know, is often the curse of an English class; it achieves little in most cases but to satisfy both teacher and student that "real work" has been accomplished. A comparative essay, in addition, can be a tricky thing; too frequently, the comparing of two long works ends up as a double plot summary instead of a definitive discussion of a single point of comparison. To forestall such frustrations for teacher and student, each person was asked to submit, at least two weeks before the essay was due, a paragraph which could serve as an introduction to the assigned paper. In it, he had to tell what books he intended to compare and what points of similarity or difference he noted from his reading. The teacher then reacted to the paragraph by writing one of her own, amplifying, when necessary, the student's thoughts or ideas or restating them more smoothly. After this exchange of writing, student and teacher got together to discuss various methods of comparison and to note specific details which might prove useful. Only then did the student continue his paper, which normally ran two to three pages in length. Two samples of this technique follow, one in which the teacher practically rewrites the paragraph, a second in which she makes only minor changes (noted in brackets) in the original:

I

(Student) The two books I am going to compare are THE GRAPES OF WRATH by Steinbeck and THE HOBBIT by Tolkien. The two books are similar in that they both depict a group of people venturing outside of their home territory. Although the authors use different types of characters, they both show how bad it is outside of one's local (sic).

(Teacher's reaction)

When a person leaves his familiar surroundings to venture outside his home territory, no matter for what reason, he often encounters difficult situations with which he must cope. Steinbeck and Tolkien show the many frustrations and hardships endured in GRAPES and HOBBIT, respectively. Although each author uses a different type of character, he clearly illustrates a common problem--outside one's home environment one encounters alien and often hostile forces which are resistant to fulfillment of one's quest.

II

Both THE BELL JAR /by Sylvia Plath/ and PLAY IT AS IT LAYS /by Joan Didion/ develop the concept of how two women struggle with their lives and finally are driven to madness. In both instances /the women/ fight feverishly for a sense of identity. /In their struggles to relate/ with friends and family /they/ search for a purpose in life. Both characters go through a series of hardships /resulting in/ withdrawals finally into complete madness. In both instances, however, the conclusions /pose/ this /question/: what actually is crazy, the characters or the world /they live in/?

In both cases, students have had help in overcoming the first problem in writing an essay: getting something on paper. This first "draft" may not be the final form of the introduction at all, but at least there is now material for the student-teacher team to work with and talk about, free of the threat of judgment (otherwise known as grading) in this early stage. There is now, also, a point of departure: into examples, illustrations, exceptions--all those elements which we mean when we plead

for more "support" of statements made in essays the student writes completely on his own--and often, as he writes, feeling lonely.

Kids found during the semester that their reading speed was picking up and that they were reading more frequently and for longer periods at a time. Many of our students bus in from across town; they found the daily trip much shorter as they used the traveling time to read.

The teacher, Mrs. Murray, gained new experience by initiating this elective. She had read some of the titles on the list, but certainly not all. She decided to join with her students in "taking the course." With small groups or with perhaps one other student, she read books new to her (and them) during class, instead of preparing outside of class time or skimming through the batch as one usually does to "get on top of" a lot of new material and keep ahead of the class. She found that discovering some books together established a very special rapport between her and class members.

But the best experience for all was the chance to talk--about the books, their elements and techniques, and, most important, each other's feelings and ideas. The class proved adaptable and flexible to the students' varied abilities and backgrounds. Each could achieve success as he worked independently and with others. And all, (including teacher!) grew to accept and understand each other better as individuals while they enriched and expanded their literary experience.

(This course is taught by Carol-Faith Murray, English Department, Point Loma High School, San Diego, California).

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SHOPTALK:

If I had to list a basic bibliography of 10 books in Popular Culture which teachers would find valuable and which some students would like, here would be the list:

1. Marshall McLuhan, UNDERSTANDING MEDIA, NY: NAL, 1964. McLuhan's book is central to the study of modern man and media's impact on him. Eccentric, and sometimes enigmatic, provocative, irritating, but always seminal.
2. Russel Nye, THE UNEMBARRASSED MUSE, NY: Dial, 1970. A well-written book, fun to read and filled with information on American Popular Culture of yesterday, adolescent books, dime novels, minstrel shows, bluegrass, etc.
3. Norman F. Cantor and Michael S. Werthman (eds.), THE HISTORY OF POPULAR CULTURE, NY: Macmillan, 1968. Original documents in the history of Popular Culture from the Greeks until modern time.
4. James D. Hart, THE POPULAR BOOK: A HISTORY OF AMERICA'S LITERARY TASTE, Berkeley: U of California Press, 1950. A study of the popular book, the reasons for popularity, and lists of the bestsellers from the early days on.
5. Ray B. Browne, et al. (eds.), HEROES OF POPULAR CULTURE, Bowling Green: Bowling Green U Popular Press, 1972. Just what the title implies.
6. Marshall Fishwick and Ray B. Browne (eds.), ICONS OF POPULAR CULTURE, Bowling Green: Bowling Green U Popular Press, 1970. Ditto above comment.
7. Marshall Fishwick, PARAMETERS OF POPULAR CULTURE, Bowling Green: Bowling Green U Popular Press, 1974. Heroes, icons, fakelore, Hollywood, etc.
8. George H. Lewis, (ed,), SIDE-SADDLE ON THE GOLDEN CALF: SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND POPULAR CULTURE IN AMERICA, Pacific Palisades, CA: Goodyear, 1972. Readings.
9. Bernard Rosenberg and David Manning White (eds.), MASS CULTURE: THE POPULAR ARTS IN AMERICA, NY: Free Press, 1957. An excellent book of readings.
10. Bernard Rosenberg and David Manning White (eds.), MASS CULTURE REVISITED; NY: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1971. Supplemental to the above book.

THE "SEA CHEST" EXPERIENCE

Mildred M. Jeranko, Frisco, North Carolina

Most of you who read this article will be familiar with FOXFIRE, the student magazine published in Rabun Gap, Georgia, but it is doubtful if many have ever heard of SEA CHEST, a magazine published by students at Cape Hatteras High School, Buxton, North Carolina.

I was introduced to FOXFIRE three years ago when my husband handed me a copy of TIME that told about a group of students in Rabun-Gap-Nacoochee High School publishing a magazine on the mountain culture of that area which was rapidly disappearing. It told how their young teacher, B. Eliot Wigginton, started the magazine in an effort to alleviate the boredom of his students for traditional grammar and literature.

This article also mentioned IDEAS, Inc. of Washington, D.C., a non-profit foundation endeavoring to promote innovative teaching ideas and methods. Eliot Wigginton had once come to them with the suggestion that his program could in other geographic and sociological areas, such an minorities, isolated cultures, or disaffected groups, give students some successful learning experiences; concern for their communities and people; responsibility and skills, and pride in themselves and their cultural roots.

SEA CHEST was begun because it seemed to me that there was no way for many of the local students to have the successful learning experiences that those who had attended school in other areas achieved. The school population is made up of local residents and transient U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Navy, Park Service, Weather Service, and Wild Life Refuge dependents.

When you look at a map of the East Coast, you will see a strip of land that bends itself around the continent. This area, so rich in history, is the long arm of sand that begins at the Virginia Capes, and broken only by erratic inlets that open and close, bends its "elbow" south at dreaded Cape Hatteras, Cape Lookout, Cape Fear, and ending near the South Carolina line. The chain of banks from the Virginia line to Cape Lookout is known as the Outer Banks of North Carolina, while other sections are named islands or banks. Hatteras Island is sixty miles long and its seven villages, served by the Cape Hatteras School (and High School) at Buxton, are scattered over a forty mile stretch of road sandwiched between the Atlantic Ocean and Pamlico Sound. It was not until 1963 that a bridge across Oregon Inlet was completed and the island linked with the mainland and the outside world.

Because of this isolation, much of the culture that vanished in the late nineteenth century elsewhere in the United States continued to exist here. Words and grammatical forms both archaic and dialectic that had disappeared from the American language but are still heard in England and Scotland, survived here. Progging, peckish, squee-whiffed (askew-whiffed in Scotland), gammet, holped, holpen, frap, and many others are heard occasionally and make the speech interesting.

The constant battle to make a living from the sea bred, an independent, self-reliant people who speak their minds. Each householder had to be a do-it-yourselfer, farmer, butcher, hunter, medicine man, weather forecaster, as well as fisherman.

With the influx of 1,700,000 tourists each year, the young people, who act as waitresses, clerks, guides, dock hands, and other service jobs, were frequently torn between their own and outside influences, but lacked the experience to evaluate the new or take pride in the island's heritage. Two of the good results from publishing this magazine has been that it has produced a sense of pride in the island and its history, and has made a bond between the older people and the young publishers. The

magazine is a partnership between grandparents, oldsters, anyone with time to spin a tale, and the students.

Three years ago when I first wrote to IDEAS Inc. Eliot Wigginton and their staff had joined forces to see if the experience of the young investigating their own roots could give other groups a changed outlook toward learning, themselves, and their cultures. The FOURTH STREET I had already begun among Puerto Ricans and blacks in a community center in New York City. It was started by a friend of Mr. Wigginton's but is not part of the FOXFIRE Project. Other groups were getting started and a first workshop to train students and teachers had been held at Rabun Gap, Georgia. Starting a magazine or other project has begun in fifteen or more locations, even the inter-city in Washington, D.C. by students of Western High School.

Other projects have been formed among Indians in the Ramah Navajo High School in New Mexico; Menomonee Indians in Wisconsin, the Choctaw High School in Mississippi; blacks in Sea Island, South Carolina. In British West Indies Jamaica's Cornwall College, Montego Bay High School, and Trenchstone School have combined to publish PEENIE WALLIE. In Haiti, the College of St. Pierre and Croix de Bouquets Community School publishes TSIM-T'SIM, in an English and French edition.

Not all the products are magazines. In Alaska, the Indians are planning to use the material that they collect for broadcasts over a radio network that connects the villages. FOXFIRE uses a television camera and tapes to record and store interviews when a process or skill such as wheel-making is employed to preserve the exact technique. FOXFIRE has also published three books and made a movie. BITTERSWEET, in Ozark Missouri, records bluegrass music and included the plastic record with its magazine. There are many other forms of expression for the material collected.

SEA CHEST can hardly be called a folklore magazine, although it does collect and publish material of this nature. It is mainly concerned with Hatteras Island, its customs, history, people, weather, environment, past, present, and future. There are also four commercial magazines serving the area that publish similiar material, sport, surfer, fishing, travel, state, general, and adventure magazines and newspapers print feature stories about the Outer Banks. Books about this area cover many subjects: shipwrecks, legends, history, aviation, birds, beaches, and personal narratives.

Early in the SEA CHEST program, the students said that they wanted to have a voice in what was happening to their island, and we have been in hot water with one group or another ever since. One irate storekeeper dumped the magazine into the nearest wastebasket because of an article featured in the first issue on some tourists and how they behave.

The Outer Banks has an almost inexhaustible source and supply of stories, with a ready market among the tourists who love the island and will buy almost anything that is written about it. We also have students who ride the school buses home to seven villages at night, making it fairly easy to collect material and to take photographs after school or on the weekend.

Our real beginning came however with a brief news release that mentioned that our magazine was being aided by IDEAS, Inc. through a grant from the Ford Foundation, and from that article a reader sent us $4 for two copies of the first issue. We were then four months from publication, but with that $4 we started; we were in business!

We didn't have much know-how, nor equipment, and if you think the students were so enthusiastic that they were tearing the door down to get into that class, they weren't! The senior class turned the project down flat as being too much work, and

the publicity just might bring in more "unwanted" tourists. The Junior and Sophomore English classes had reservations about me, because too many other teachers had started ambitious projects that somehow didn't materialzie. They were willing to try however, if they did not have to study grammar and literature. At that point, I did not have a copy of a journalism book so that I could teach the class as journalism, and I had not seen the inside of a School of Journalism since 1932. In addition, I knew little or nothing about the new printing processes and make-up. We were 130 miles from a book store and 60 miles from the printer.

Three students and I went to Rabun Gap, Georgia, to a workshop that Eliot Wigginton and his FOXFIRE students conducted, and from that experience we learned by doing. I do not think that anything can match the generosity of the FOXFIRE group.

IDEAS Inc. provided us with an enlarger, a camera, darkroom equipment and supplies. They also financed our two trips to Rabun Gap, and sent Ann Vick and Karen Cox to advise us. The school board provided us with an office and the assurance that if we got into financial trouble they would help us.

Much that we tried at first went haywire. Cassettes would fail to record because batteries went dead, or the microphone was not turned on and the student had lost an interview. The elderly people being interviewed would freeze when the tape recorder started and refuse to say another word. One student interviewing a man was shocked to hear himself answering his own questions on the cassette. Photographs were often so bad that they had to be retaken.

Our successful first issue was the result of assistance from many people, but if one could be singled out it would be Kerry Sipe, State Editor of the RALEIGH NEWS AND OBSERVER. He came here to take pictures and interview the students even before we went to Rabun Gap. The article brought in a flood of subscriptions, gifts, and donations.

We had one student who knew how to process film and print negatives. We could have gotten some of our local photographers to help teach these skills except that they could not come to school during the day and it was too difficult to get students back to school at night from a such a large area.

We began work with the new semester in February 1973, and sent the first magazine to the printers April 28 that same year. We had no backlog of copy and not yet are we able to do the in-depth research that FOXFIRE does so ably. When their staff transcribes an interview, any extraneous materials are filed by subject heading e.g., midwives, hog killing, or ghosts mentioned are filed until enough material has collected, and someone is interested enough to do an article on that subject. At first we needed all available copy too badly to stockpile any. However stories did develop from some of the chance remarks recorded.

One of our best stories came from our readers and is about a black man named Tom Angell. When we started to look for material, there was a good supply of it. Some of his personal belongings had been carefully preserved and we were loaned treasured photographs of this black man who had been dead for thirty-six years. The daughter of the white couple who had adopted him and given him their name is still living at 91, and it was she who had first written to us about Tom Angell.

Other stories won't develop even with good material. One about a porpoise oil factory that processed oil for fine watches and another one on lighthouse keepers are still being explored. Both are interesting stories.

Under my sponsorship, we published four issues of SEA CHEST. Contrary to Marshall McLuhan, the message is not the media in this case. It is the learning and

growth that takes place in the student. It is impossible to look in a student's head to see if they had learned, so the intellectual and social growth, the competencies that they develop, the responsibilities they show toward each other and the people they interview, are the criteria. Even here it is extremely nebulous, for not all growth can be equated as happening because of SEA CHEST. This is an example.

Irvin transferred into SEA CHEST to keep from having to write compositions. He could not write intellibibly nor read with much comprehension, yet he always made oral contributions when we compiled stories.

Perhaps the process of compiling needs an explanation here. It was used when we could not get information by interviews. We sat in class and pooled information, and compiled the results. The Tourist Guide, much of the controversial tourist story, superstitions, and weather saying were collected this way. We tried this system for a story about the surfers, but the students were so bitter against visiting surfers that we could not publish it.

Irvin worked at whatever chores he was asked to do with a contagious cheer. When Karen Cox of FOXFIRE came to help us, he arranged for her to take photographs of the Old Christmas celebration at Rodanthe, (January 7), and helped her with that. He learned to clean the small offset press, the dirtiest job we had. He learned photography, and he was fairly good.

In February of our second year, Irvin was invited to New York to ski with some tourist friends he had met during the summer. They were wealthy, but then so was he. He had shared his world generously with them, and they were sharing theirs. I do not know how many nets Irvin helped haul out of the winter seas to make that trip, but he rode a fish truck to New York City to cut expenses. It must have been worthwhile for he came back full of happiness.

When does a miracle happen? Irvin now cares about his spelling, reading, and writing. He talks of going to college to study sociology. He and another student worked on one of the published stories, and Irvin did the entire transcription. When we sat down to edit the story, Irvin was the authority. Sentence by sentence we examined his text as he decided what stayed or how it could be changed to sound better. If you had told Irvin that he knew anything about grammar, he would not have believed you.

During the year and a half that I sponsored this program, I saw many students mature and achieve an expanded awareness of themselves, their neighbors, and their communities. Dr. Jerome H. Melton of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction thought that the fact that our students felt that the SEA CHEST project had given them more options for their lives, was one of the strengths of the program.

Eliot Wigginton cautions that student evaluations often give the teacher only what the student thinks you want to hear, but since I have been using evaluations for years (ARIZONA ENGLISH BULLETIN, Feb. 1971, p. 43) and it did not appear from the results that my students hesitated to speak their thoughts, I use it, and it aids me. In the two classes there were some who could not pass regular English and some were the better students. I have retained their spelling and sentence structure so that you do not expect instant genius. Some of their evaluations follow:

"SEA CHEST has been fun and rewarding. I'll admit that at times i was lazy and dind't do much, but I was the same in all other classes. It was just great to talk to the older people and to hear how life used to be on our island. I found out that they were once kids just like us and they got into just as much trouble. It was fun being recognized in so many (news)papers and it was really worthwhile when we

received our awards at South Carolina. (All-Southern in Literary Magazines and Superior in Photo-Journalism from Southern Interscholastic Press Association.) I have become more aware of office work and found out that publishing a magazine is not as easy as it looks."

"I have learned how to work in the darkroom and do the layout. And I have learn how to talk to Old people. But most of all I learn how to do the Weather Station stuff."

"I learned more about business that I could possibly have learned from a book. If you have a problem with writing letters, keeping books, receipt writing, or typing there is always someone there to teach you the right way. That someone is not the teacher, it is a kid that you have known all your life that talks just like you do. You get so involved when you realize that this story is written by <u>you</u> that you are very careful of mistakes. Sometimes you end up typing a page several times but that helps you. My grades have risen since I have been on the SEA CHEST staff for many reasons. I have been given responsibility and I now know how to express my opinion without feeling that anything I say will immediately be wrong because the teacher feels that her opinion is the only right one. I know that the teacher is not always as informed on some subjects as I am, and that they have their strong points just as I have mine."

"I have learned how to interview people and not be scared or nervous when I am asking people questions. I have learned a little more about camera; how to take good pictures; to transcribe an interview; to proofread it; what kind of headlines and captions should be used in a story. Most of all I have learned how to be patient with students and try to teach them something they don't already know."

"I have learned how to talk to the people of the island who are natives and I am not. I have learned how to go on an interview, transcribe tapes, to edit, and a little layout. I also caught up, or brushed up on my developing and printing pictures and film."

"I have learned how to do things I have never done before. I have watched people do things and I can do some of those things on my own. It really has been an experience I have liked. Some of these people don't take it that serious, they don't want to participate in it. You also learn some things that has happened in the past that is interesting. We have learned how to talk to people and to listen to people and they have enjoyed talking to us."

"So far in the SEA CHEST office I have learned to write letters and make them more interesting to the reader. My typing has improved and I feel that it is because I'm typing more. It has really helped in my Typing I class. SEA CHEST has also helped me understand older people. I now pay more attention to what they have to say. It has really helped me become closer to my grandmother and others."

"I have embettered my typing and have learned a little about the layout of the magazine. More than anything I think I have come to realize how important SEA CHEST is and just what it is doing for our school and in preserving our island."

"This year in SEA CHEST I have learned to talk to old people. At the first of the year we went on an interview and the lady we were talking with stiffened right up when we turned on the tape recorder. We got a lot from her, but we didn't get what we wanted. So after that I thought we wouldn't get a story for the magazine but we kept on trying until we got a story. ("The Ghost on the Hill.") Kathy and I have had a story in every magazine except the last one. I really enjoyed reading our magazine, and when I read our first story in SEA CHEST, it makes you feel like you are important and you can do anything you want if you put your mind to it."

"In my first year in journalism, I learned how to talk to other people and I

learned to respect their way whether I believe them or not. Most of all I think I learned a lot about Hatteras Island that I didn't no." (One of his stories, "We Call Him 'Doc'", was republished by the NORTH CAROLINA SOCIAL STUDIES JOURNAL.)

"I believe members of the SEA CHEST have learned to work together like for example when a couple of us want to go out on interviews and we don't have a way to go somebody is always willing to take us whether they have a class or not. And when it is time to get our magazine together people are willing to come out and help no matter if it is Friday night or Saturday, when we could go to the beach or just sleep all day."

"My experience in organizing SEA CHEST has been one of the best things that happened in my high school years. I learned how to develip photos, to intervue older people, and heard some unreal stuff. To rap things up I learned how to put a good mazizine together and that's a lot of work. To me doing what we have done is much Better and more Interesting than Adj. Adv. Sud. Det."

This next evaluation was written by a boy who acts as mate on party boats and is a mite commercial.

"What time I've been in this class I have learned more to help me out of school than any other class. I have lerned how to talk to people in meny different ways. I have lerned how to read better in transcribing and editing stories. It helps you to spell better to. But More than anything I've learned more about histry on the island I'm liveing on than I knew. It helps to know something about where your living because if you work around turists like on party boats you can tell them a lot about it and it helps your pay a lot."

In April 1974, a group of FOXFIRE sponsors when to Washington, D.C. to attend a working symposium with B. Eliot Wigginton and the IDEAS staff to try to add our experiences to the material that Wigginton was writing as a guide for teachers who want to try this program, but are not able to attend workshops or training programs.

Wingginton calls these learning experiences "moments" in which a kid has something happen to get his head turned around, and he recognizes the fact that he is a worthwhile person who can do a good job. He believes that once the student is satisfied as to his own ability and worth, he can expand his mind to the worth and needs of others. The process of making the magazine provides many such experiences where the young interact with older people in many ways other then the interviews.

When a student on our magazine calls an author to ask permission to quote his copyrighted material, he does not just make a telephone call. He knows why permission is necessary, and that he also needs a letter to verify the call. Calls and letters ordering supplies are made by students, and the replies ususally come in addressed to them. This process provides dozens of contacts that are important, not only because they are necessary to SEA CHEST, but because the experience is real. The student then understands why newspapers and magazines need his permission to reprint his material.

The darkroom also provides these "moments" as does addressing, sorting, and mailing the magazine by zip code. They learn the business of the post office at first hand, and what the mailing permit does and does not do. The mail sacks, sorted and packed, then carried to the post office is a really man-sized transaction between the students and the postmaster.

When readers write to commend or criticize the magazine, it is a learning experience that reinforces their self-images. To be taken seriously by their elders is an exciting experience for most of them. One student, who was investigating pound

nets, came back from the interview and sat by the desk to give me all the fascinating information he had collected, then added, "He even told a dirty joke, and we have it on tape but we won't want to publish it." He knew that he had been treated as an adult.

Another student said, "We don't need a written test in here. Our examinations are graded by our subscribers." That, to me, is knowing the real purpose of learning.

EXCHANGE, the bulletin for exchange of information among student publications based on the FOXFIRE Learning Concept carries this line on its mast: Devoted To Extending An Educational Concept That No Longer Presumes That Cultural Differences Mean Cultural Inferiority. If you respect your students and their cultures, and are interested in starting some type of project, I hope that you will consider beginning with this, with and for students who are not all on the Dean's list or the honor roll. A project that goes this route will fail in some of the vital goals. I know of only one magazine that restricts or hand-picks its staff. But you do need to attract the brighter students. . .I doubt that you can operate without some of them.

I do not worry about a plethora of magazines that may spring up as a result of the interest in this type of learning. Some will be successful, but all of them will be useful to those who produce them. There are, however, other products that can result from these experiences although they do not have the variety that is build into publishing a magazine. Movies, newspapers, books, slides and tape productions, radio, television broadcasts are some of the things that can be done with the material collected. One project that did not materialize was a plan to collect the oral history of the civil rights movement before the people involved in it died, then use it on the radio to build a bridge to the present for young blacks.

Haiti publishes its magazine in French and English. The Chactaw group have to translate from Chactaw to English, using a dictionary nearly one hundred years old, but in this process, the young are learning the Chactaw language, and it could even result in a new dictionary.

If you do begin a similiar project, please do not expect a great amount of enthusiasm from your students, nor your fellow faculty members, but get them all involved if you can. This program can be a school-wide effort, with the business, English, history, and industrial arts departments helping and learning too. Our business department has been most helpful with use of machines, typing, and letter writing. The English teacher provided poems from her classes. The industrial arts teacher allowed our students to build the light table there under his direction.

I do not think that my telling you how we do things will be of much help. I do think that the manual Eliot Wigginton has written, back copies of EXCHANGE, and a bulletin on "how-to-do" certain necessary processes that IDEAS has prepared will be of great help. Yet basically it is a learning experience for teachers and students. I learned from the students how to set up the bookkeeping, organize an office, and many other things. From the publisher, I learned how to put the magazine together. From Eliot Wigginton, Karen Cox, and Ann Vick, we learned certain things to do and not do, so that we were spared much grief in not allowing our files to be used by researchers, nor let our friends we interview be located by address, so that they won't be victimized, as were some of the Rabun Gap contacts.

My biggest contributions were: faith that we could publish a magazine that would sell; knowing what makes a good feature story and where to find one; and how to meet a deadline. The sharing of discoveries and successes could be lost when the teacher has all the answers, as it can in any class. You will be given an education by your students, publisher, subscribers, and the community.

It is also a lesson in democracy, since almost every decision or policy was decided by popular vote. When it was something I did not particularly like, I tried to accept the decision gracefully, since the students know more about their island than I do. When it was a decision that our county superintendent, Seth Henderson hoped they would accept, they voted it down and give him valid reasons. He also gave them courteous treatment by accepting their decision when he didn't have to.

Our students have gained in poise, confidence in themselves, mastery of skills, and the ability to communicate. They have a greater pride in the Outer Banks and its people, but are determined to see that the island is not destroyed for personal gain.

Much of this gain has come about because the students feel that what they are doing is real; real letters, orders, money, sales, subscribers, and a real magazine with their names, stories, and opinions in it. The product may be called FOXFIRE, SEA CHEST, DOVETAIL, SALT, SKIPJACK, ANGEL OAK, BITTERSWEET, PEENIE WALLIE, TSA'ASZI, TSIM TSIM, KIL-KAAS-GIT or NAIH WAIYA, but it is really what happens to your students.

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Current Publications of IDEAS

MOMENTS--$4.80 per copy
EXCHANGE, bound previous issues (6)--$5.00
EXCHANGE, subscription for one year--$3.00
TIPS AND TECHNIQUES--$3.00

Student oriented material being written by Pam Wood of SALT should be in print this spring. At this time it is not known what the cost will be.

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SEA CHEST magazine is now being sponsored ably by Richard Lebowitz since Mildred Jeranko retired at the end of the 1973-74 school year.

THE RELIGIOUS PRESS

Enola Borgh, University of Wisconsin--Milwaukee

Last month book editors across the country were referring to THE TOTAL WOMAN by Marabel Morgan as a "sleeper" after PUBLISHERS WEEKLY (February 3, 1975) announced that it was the nation's top seller in the nonfiction market. This "how-to-do-it" book surpassed ALL THE PRESIDENT'S MEN by Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward, its nearest competitor, by almost 100,000 sales. A call to the publisher of THE TOTAL WOMAN, the Fleming H. Revell Company in Old Tappan, New Jersey, reached the publicity director, who reported that almost 370,000 copies of THE TOTAL WOMAN had been sold in hardcover, that 450,000 were now in print, and that Pocket Books had purchased publishing rights for over half a million dollars. Publishers are often reluctant to issue figures, but a suggested norm for the sales of bestsellers in the mainstream is somewhere between fifty to one hundred thousand copies in hardcover the first year.

The popularity of THE TOTAL WOMAN was a surprise to book editors who concentrate on mainstream publications because it probably never appeared on local or national best-seller lists. For example, the December 1974, bestseller list of PUBLISHERS WEEKLY listed these as the top ten in nonfiction:

ALL THINGS BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL, James Herriot (16,000 copies)
TALES OF POWER, Carlos A. Castaneda
A BRIDGE TOO FAR, Cornelius Ryan
STRICTLY SPEAKING, Edwin Newman
THE BERMUDA TRIANGLE, Charles Berlitz with J. Manson Valentine
THE PALACE GUARD, Dan Rather and Gary Paul Gates
THE MEMORY BOOK, Harry Lorayne and Jerry Lucas
ALL THE PRESIDENT'S MEN, Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward
THE WOMAN HE LOVED, Ralph G. Martin
MORE JOY, edited by Alex Comfort

There is, of course, a logical explanation for the omission of THE TOTAL WOMAN. PUBLISHERS WEEKLY compiles its bestseller lists from reports of large city bookstore chains and local bestseller lists across the country. Local newspapers compile their lists from reports of stories that deal with the general trade books. If the general trade store stocks religious books at all, they are Bibles, commentaries on the Bible, and perhaps a few titles of popular theology. But across the country, usually off the main arteries of the city, are hundreds of religious bookstores selling a variety of religious items, including the books of the 109 publishers listed in LITERARY MARKET PLACE, 1974-75, as "religious." A few of these are mainstream publishers with religious branches, but the majority are relatively small houses with special sectarian orientation. Revell, for example, is considered Protestant evangelical in its preference. According to PUBLISHERS WEEKLY, most of the sales for THE TOTAL WOMAN were in cities outside the large metropolitan areas. Another possible reason that religious bestsellers do not gain national attention--though this is not true of THE TOTAL WOMAN--is that they are paperback originals and for this reason their sales are not normally tabulated for bestseller lists. As a matter of fact, it would be nearly impossible to achieve anything like an accurate account of sales from any source other than the publishers, for many churches are direct outlets for these religious houses.

PUBLISHERS WEEKLY and the nation's book editors, however, could have suspected the possibility of a "sleeper" by checking the annual bestseller list of the National Religious Booksellers' BOOKSTORE JOURNAL. According to this list, the top-selling hardcovers for 1974 were:

THE TOTAL WOMAN, Morgan, Revell
WHERE HE LEADS, Evans-Rogers, Revell
TRAMP FOR THE LORD, ten Boom, Chosen/Revell, CLC

SOMEONE CARES, Rice, Revell
FINGER LICKIN' GOOD, Sanders, Creation
THIRD BASE IS MY HOME, Robinson, Word
STREAMS IN THE DESERT, Cowman, Zondervan
THE ONE AND ONLY YOU, Larson, Word
HEART GIFTS, Rice, Revell
WHEN YOU GRADUATE, Allen & Briggs, Revell
(This list and the two that follow are reprinted with permission of Christian News Service, Box 6001, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506.)

Publishers report that these hardcovers all sold 25,000 or more during the first eight months of 1974. This number can be contrasted with the 16,000 indicated for ALL THINGS BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL on the PUBLISHERS WEEKLY list for December.

The bestsellers among the religious paperbacks all sold 100,000 or more during the first eights months of 1974. They include:
THERE'S A NEW WORLD COMING, Lindsey, Vision
THE LATE GREAT PLANET EARTH, Lindsey, Zondervan
THE LIBERATION OF PLANET EARTH, Lindsey, Zondervan
SATAN IS ALIVE AND WELL ON PLANET EARTH, Lindsey, Zondervan
THE VISION, Wilkerson, Spire/Revell
THE HIDING PLACE, ten Boom, Chosen/Revell
PRISON TO PRAISE, Carothers, Logos
THE CROSS AND THE SWITCHBLADE, Wilkerson, Spire/Revell
THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY, Christenson, Bethany
TEN THOUSAND MILES FOR A MIRACLE, Kuhlman, Bethany

Still another category to be considered includes the Bibles and Bibical commentaries. Since it was published three years ago, THE LIVING BIBLE, a modern paraphrase by Ken Taylor published by Tyndale, has outdistanced all its competitors in this category. Tyndale, based in Wheaton, Illinois, has no accurate figures on the number of sales but reports confidently that there are at least eighteen million copies in print. THE LIVING BIBLE is followed by these publications in sales in 1974:
HALLEY'S BIBLE HANDBOOK, Halley, Zondervan
NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION, New Testament, Zondervan
NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE, Creation, Gospel, Moody
LAYMAN'S PARALLEL BIBLE, Zondervan
EERDMAN'S HANDBOOK TO THE BIBLE, Alexander, Eerdmans
THE LAYMAN'S PARALLEL NEW TESTAMENT, Zondervan
STRONG'S CONCORDANCE TO THE BIBLE, Strong, Abingdon
CRUDEN'S COMPLETE CONCORDANCE, Cruden, Zondervan
MATTHEW HENRY'S COMMENTARY, Henry, Zondervan

Not reported on these lists are the perennial bestsellers, such as GOOD NEWS FOR MODERN MAN, THE NEW TESTAMENT IN TODAY'S ENGLISH VERSION, published by the American Bible Society. The paperback edition, featuring simple sketch illustrations, sold over five million copies its year of publication, 1966. According to CHRISTIANITY TODAY (March 15, 1974), GOOD NEWS has now passed the forty-five million mark.

Leslie Cross, the book editor of the MILWAUKEE JOURNAL (September 29, 1974), reports that nationally the sale of books with religious orientation increased nine million dollars from 1971 to 1972 and seven million more in 1973. These are figures from the Association of American Publishers. At first it may seem difficult to reconcile these statistics with the figures of diminishing church membership released almost every Saturday evening by the religious editors of the large daily newspapers. (A 1971 Gallup Poll reported that only forty percent of adults of all faiths attended church during an average week. The percentage has been steadily declining since the poll was introduced in 1955.) An analysis of the publishers and some of their bestsellers offers some interesting hypotheses to explain this apparent paradox.

The repetition of Zondervan and Lindsey is inescapable. A call to Zondervan was transferred to the publicity director, who explained that the popularity of the Lindsey books could only be associated with the growing evangelism of the more conservative Protestant sects. The liberal theology as it is developed at some of the more humanistic seminaries has no appeal for wide sectors of the population looking for a personal relationship with God and for absolute rather than relative standards of ethics and morality. Zondervan, while it is non-denominational, considers itself an evangelical house. The publishing house began in a vacant room of a Michigan farm house in 1931, when two brothers opened a book depot, which became a publishing house in 1933. Today Zondervan reports a yearly volume of twenty-five and one-half million books; its expanded operations include not only books and Bibles but Biblically oriented products, music, and recordings. In the last five years it opened and now operates forty family-owned book stores.

Hal Lindsey's THE LATE GREAT PLANET EARTH, first published in May 1970, has remained on the bestseller lists for hardcover and paperback. Zondervan estimates that there are over six million copies now in print, including the two million that Bantam released to the mass market. In 1974 its total sales outdistanced the newer Lindsey books, THE LIBERATION OF PLANET EARTH, which sold 350,000 in six months, and SATAN IS ALIVE AND WELL ON PLANET EARTH, published in 1972, with one million, two hundred thousand copies now in print. (Bantam has released five to six hundred thousand copies of SATAN to the mass market, and mainstream bookstores sometimes feature it in a section entitled "the occult.") The last Lindsey book, which led the religious paperbacks for 1974, was published under his own aegis, Vision. From Zondervan I learned that Lindsey is a graduate of the Dallas Theological Seminary, by reputation a conservative institution, and that he is now a very popular lecturer on the college campuses as a traveling speaker for the Campus Crusade for Christ.

The title, THE LATE GREAT PLANET EARTH, is somewhat misleading. One of my librarian friends had inadvertently cataloged it with the books on ecology. Instead, its great popularity can be attributed to the fact that it is apocalyptic. It deals with prophecy and futurism. An evangelical Christian, Lindsey asserts the literal interpretation of the Bible. His major premise is that time after time the prophecies of the Old Testament prophets proved historically correct. He projects the theory--even the belief--that the millenium of REVELATIONS is near because the conditions which were to precede it are becoming historical. Chief of these is the restoration of the Jewish nation. As soon as the Jews totally repossess old Jerusalem and rebuild the ancient temple on its historic site, all the primary conditions will have been fulfilled. Another condition, the revival of Rome, seems more remote in the light of the perennial collapse of the Italian governments. Lindsey, however, circumvents this problem by seeing in the European Common Market a revival of the ancient empire. The appeal of the book is not only to the conservative wing of Protestantism--Lindsey refers derogatorily to "Ecumaniacs"--but also to the conservative elements of the political sector. It is strongly pro-military and anti-Russian. Its rhetoric is that of the imperative, with short sentences and paragraphs. The larger problems of nuclear arms, population growth, and pollution, which might logically support the title, are lost in Lindsey's predictions and maps of exactly where and how the holocaust will take place. Christians are reminded, however, that this final disaster will mean for them heightened blessedness.

Revell is another evangelical house that has been enjoying great success, as a glance at the bestseller lists will prove. THE VISION, by David Wilkerson, is also apocalyptic. THE CROSS AND THE SWITCHBLADE describe Wilkerson's life as a street preacher. But Revell's runaway bestseller, THE TOTAL WOMAN, suggests that religious publishers are broadening the scope of their offerings and including titles that attempt to show the adaptation of religion to everyday life.

I had to spend $5.95 for a copy of THE TOTAL WOMAN, for I could not find it in libraries. In the kindest sense, it is a "how-to-do-it" book--how to save a marriage. Its approach is often simplistic, a delineation of obvious common sense. At other times, especially when it deals with sexual relations in marriage, it is either foolish or offensive. Marabel Morgan, a former beauty queen, is a thirty-six year old Miami housewife and mother of two, who found some easy ways to enliven her marriage. She not only provides specific assignments for the Total Woman program; she now directs courses with the aid of one hundred or more of her alumnae across the country. The publicity director of Revell, herself a married woman with grown children, thought that the immense popularity of the book indicated that there were many troubled marriages among religious women for whom divorce was not an option. (Mrs. Morgan quotes frequently from the Bible, Dr. Reuben, and Ann Landers.) She acknowledged that the success could also be attributed, at least in part, to a backlash against the feminists, for the Total Woman finds total fulfillment in the role of wife, mother, and homemaker. It is very possible that thousands--even millions--of women feel threatened by Gloria Steinem and Germaine Greer, preferring the title Mrs. to Ms.

An overtly anti-feminist book is THE FEMININE PRINCIPLE by Judith Mills, a publication of Bethany Fellowship, Minneapolis, Minnesota. (Bethany has a Lutheran setting.) This softcover book asserts that a woman's purpose is to give pleasure to her husband, her children, and other women. Another "how-to" book is HOW TO STAY YOUNGER WHILE GROWING OLDER by Reuel L. Howe. It is published by Word, an evangelical house especially devoted to church renewal, based in Waco, Texas.

In addition to apocalyptic statements and practical manuals, publishers have found that personal narratives based on religious experience sell well. Carrie ten Boom's THE HIDING PLACE published by Chosen and distributed by Revell, is a good example. A bestseller, THE HIDING PLACE has been made into a motion picture by World Wide Pictures, Burbank, California. The cast includes such well-known actors as Julie Harris, Eileen Heckart and Arthur O'Connell. The story is true, set in Haarlem, Holland, during the German occupation of World War II, and in the Ravensbruck prison, where the ten Boon family were punished for providing a hiding place for Dutch Jews. Carrie, the only family survivor of the concentration camp, has spent her time since the liberation "witnessing" to the "good news." TRAMP FOR THE LORD by Carrie ten Boom was second on the bestseller list for religious hardcovers in January 1975. The January 1975 issue of BOOKSTORE JOURNAL advertised pre-publication advertising kits for Pat Boone's A MIRACLE A DAY KEEPS THE DEVIL AWAY, to be published October 28, 1975. The book which will retail for $4.95, is described as "thrilling accounts of daily miracles in the life of a talented Christian celebrity...miracles that prove God's overwhelming love and compassion." Another story of personal witness is STANDING TALL by Kathryn Kuhlman. Bethany Fellowship published this story of a teen-age victim of arthritis who was healed by prayer.

At a time when many mainstream publishers have found it necessary to join huge conglomerates in order to survive, these relatively small religious houses seem to be enjoying a boom. A detached observer can only speculate about the why. In our contemporary literature courses students seem to enjoy reading John Barth, who tells them that the world is everything that is the case, and Kurt Vonnegut, who writes of the Church of God the Utterly Indifferent and Bokononism. But they do not seem to believe Barth and Vonnegut. In their personal lives they seem to respond to the appeal of other-worldliness. Perhaps the same impulse that sends them flocking to courses in fantasy, science fiction, and the occult directs their romantic natures toward the charismatic and evangelical in religion. Or perhaps the absolute values of Christianity provide a kind of rock of ages--Logos, the Word--in a culture still reeling from the premature arrival of the future.

TEACHING THE NEW JOURNALISM

John Hollowell and Rex Pemberton, University of Arizona

> Haul ass, Kesey. Move. Scram. Split flee hide vanish disintegrate. Like run.
>
> Rrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrev revrevrevrevrevrevrevrevrev or we gonna have just a late Mexican re-run of the scene on the rooftop in San Francisco and sit here with the motor spinning and watch with fascination while the cops they climb up once again to come git you- - -. . .
>
> COME ON MAN, DO YOU NEED A COPY OF THE SCRIPT TO SEE HOW THIS MOVIE GOES? YOU HAVE MAYBE 40 SECONDS LEFT BEFORE THEY COME GET YOU.
>
> - - a Volkswagen has been cruising up and down the street for no earthly reason at all, except that they are obviously working with fake telephone linesmen outside the window who whistle--
>
> THERE THEY GO AGAIN. . .
>
> MORE TELEFONO TRUCKS! TWO LOUD WHISTLES THIS TIME--FOR NO EARTHLY REASON EXCEPT TO COME GIT YOU. YOU HAVE MAYBE 35 SECONDS LEFT
>
> - - Kesey has Cornel Wilde Running Jacket ready hanging on the wall, a jungle-jim corduroy jacket stashed with fishing line, money, DDT, tablet, ball-points, flashlight, and grass. Has it timed by test runs that he can be out of the window, down through a hole in the roof below, down a drain pipe, over a wall and into the thickest jungle in 45 seconds--. . .
>
> (Tom Wolfe, THE ELECTRIC KOOL-AID ACID TEST, NY: Bantam, 1969, pp. 256-7)

Teaching nonfiction in the high school or college class in composition typically develops from a sense of duty. The enthusiasm we generate for the latest Updike story, that "classic" novel we've taught so often and so well, or a play like DEATH OF A SALESMAN seems lost on nonfiction. Dutifully we turn to that section of the anthology marked "Biography" or "Nonfiction" to find excerpts from the great autobiographies of Franklin or Henry Adams, and possibly some essays by Bacon, Macaulay, and E.B. White. But the vital juices that seem to flow for stories, novels, and plays--for literature, after all--do not seem to transfer to the classroom treatment of nonfiction. How can we generate enthusiasm for material that is even defined negatively--as non fiction?

Fortunately for teachers and students of composition, one of the most interesting and exciting literary developments in the last decade has been the rise of a new style of popular magazine article--the "new journalism." The new genre which brings the reporter's impressionistic, subjective viewpoint to the reporting of contemporary history has been called by a variety of names: "the nonfiction novel," "socio-literature," "parajournalism," and "the literature of fact." Whatever term is used to describe the transformation of magazine journalism by such writers as Gay Talese, Tom Wolfe, Joan Didion, and Hunter Thompson, and such novelists as Truman Capote and Norman Mailer, new journalism is an important feature of our time. In this essay, we would like to suggest the potential of new journalism for the teaching of composition, to outline possible methods of organizing such a course, and to detail writing assignments that have proved successful in our freshman composition classes.

WHY TEACH NEW JOURNALISM?

Three main attractions of the new style provide the foundation for our course in composition. First, the subject matter treated in the new journalistic style is in-

herently interesting to students. Collectively, magazine articles from such sources as NEW YORK magazine, ESQUIRE, THE NEW YORKER, HARPER'S, ATLANTIC, and ROLLING STONE comprise a cultural history of the past two decades of American life. New journalistic articles have ranged from the civil rights movement to the Vietnam war, from the Hollywood colony to Andy Warhol's Factory, from flower-power in Haight-Ashbury to the selling of the presidency. Second, we have found that exposing students to the invigorating use of language by new journalists can lead them to discover new, creative possibilities for their own writing. Third, because the success of new journalistic writing lies in the application of the techniques of fiction to reporting, such a course allows the teacher to raise important questions about the nature of all writing. Can any report of the "facts" be objective? What are the stylistic differences between "straight" reporting and the fictionalized reporting of the new style? When is something literature? Does nonfiction qualify as literature?

Before discussing in detail possible ways of organizing such a course and providing sample assignments, let us summarize briefly what is "new" about journalism. The new style generates excitement in the classroom because it mediates between the traditional essay and what is usually considered "creative" writing. Because it inhabits a literary no-man's-land between "mere" reportage and literature, it raises important questions about the differences between self-conscious literary art and the popular arts.

New journalism differs in two main ways from traditional reporting: (1) the reporter's attitudes and values differ markedly from those of the who-what-where-when journalist; and (2) the form of the news "story" often resembles a short story rather than the synoptic summary of the typical article. Critic Robert Scholes has given the best short definition of the genre, observing that the new journalist

> . . .operates differently from the orthodox journalist. Perhaps the credulous believe that a reporter reports facts and that newspapers print all of them that are fit to print. But actually newspapers print all of the "facts" that fit, period--that fit the journalistic conventions of what a "story" is (those tired formulas) and that fit the editorial policy of the paper. The /new journalist/ fights this tendency toward formula with his own personality. He asserts the importance of his vision of the world. He embraces the fictional element inevitable in any reporting and tries to imagine his way toward the truth ("Double Perspective on Hysteria," SATURDAY REVIEW, August 24, 1968, p. 37).

An important challenge of teaching the new journalism is, of course, to involve students in the gritty problem of definition itself. We insist that students apply the same standards of close reading and rhetorical analysis to the magazine article as they would to any other genre and that they develop their own lists of attributes which characterize the form. After reading a good deal of new journalism, our students might conclude that the new journalist:

1. attempts to create a personal voice or persona that reflects his own attitudes and values, often by making the reporter a "character" in the action
2. shows less deference to "official" news sources and to accredited versions of the "facts"
3. strives to convey to the reader the subjective atmosphere and ethos that surround the characters and events he describes
4. borrows from a wide variety of fictional techniques including creating dramatic scenes, reconstructing dialogue, using flashbacks, employing foreshadowing, and creating a narrative drive more often found in short fiction

The list might be lengthened considerably, but we have found that asking students to define new journalism helps them to become more perceptive readers.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COURSE

The composition course in new journalism might be organized with reference to chronology, theme, or narrative technique, depending upon the needs and interests of teacher and students. Three excellent anthologies of new journalistic writing are available to the theacher. Nicolaus Mills' THE NEW JOURNALISM: AN HISTORICAL ANTHOLOGY (NY: McGraw-Hill, 1974) features forty articles arranged chronologically from the civil rights activism to the Watts riots of 1965, from the Vietnam war to the political conventions of 1972. An equally interesting but more specialized volume is ESQUIRE editor Harold Hayes' SMILING THROUGH THE APOCALYPSE (NY: Delta, 1971). Forty of ESQUIRE's best articles of the 1960s are arranged under such topical headings as "The Rise and Fall of Charisma," "Egos, Superegos and Ids," "Some Failures in Communication" (the Credibility Gap, the Generation Gap, and the Color Gap), "Living Up to Our Commitment in Vietnam," and "Creative Agonies."

Perhaps the most useful book is Tom Wolfe and E.W. Johnson's THE NEW JOURNALISM, WITH AN ANTHOLOGY (NY: Harper, 1973). The editors have arranged twenty-three magazine articles by such writers as Wolfe, Didion, George Plimpton, and Hunter Thompson around the "writing problems" faced by each writer. Writing problems considered include creating a persona, gathering realistic details, using point of view, and providing historical background. Wolfe's introduction about his own role in the rise of new journalism and the headnotes which introduce each selection offer valuable teaching aids.

Our own course in freshman composition is based on the Wolfe anthology and includes the following three thematic units:

UNIT ONE: Egos, Superegos and Ids

Rex Reed: "Ava--Life in the Afternoon" (a portrait of actress Ava Gardner as a declining middle-aged star)

Gay Talese: "The Soft Psyche of Joshua Logan" (An inside look at a director's skill in the production of a Broadway play)

Barbara Goldsmith: "La Dolce Viva" (a close examination of an Andy Warhol superstar)

Richard Goldstein: "Gear" (a New York teenager's entry into the adolescent world of hip clothing)

Supplementary Books: Reed, DO YOU SLEEP IN THE NUDE?; Talese, FAME AND OBSCURITY: PORTRAITS BY GAY TALESE; Mike Royko, BOSS.

Writing Problems: The aim of the unit is to direct students toward the use of dialogue and realistic details to create a character sketch or a series of vignettes; discussion is broadened to include other aspects of biographical and autobiographical writing.

UNIT TWO: Politics--Radical and Conventional

Garry Wills: "Martin Luther King Is Still on the Case" (the slain civil rights leader's lasting impact on the liberation of blacks)

Joe McGinniss: "The Selling of the President, 1968" (the use of advertising in Richard Nixon's presidential campaign)

Tom Wolfe: "Mau-Mauing the Flak Catchers" (an analysis of tactics used by minority groups to exploit federal poverty programs)

Supplementary Books: Mailer, THE ARMIES OF THE NIGHT, MIAMI AND THE SIEGE OF OF CHICAGO; Hunter Thompson, FEAR AND LOATHING ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL, 1972; Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, ALL THE PRESIDENT'S MEN.

Writing Problems: The unit explores the difficulties of "objectivity;" the reporter's use of dramatic scenes and dialogue to reconstruct the ethos of a political convention. Does a writer's involvement in the events detract from his account?

UNIT THREE: Life in Edge City

Robert Christgau: "Beth Ann and Macrobioticism" (a teenager's adherence to a fad diet leads to her death)

Joan Didion: "Slouching Towards Bethlehem" (the blooming of flower-power in San Francisco)

Terry Southern: "Twirling at Ole Miss" (a portrait of the South's foremost school of baton twirling)

Joe Eszterhas: "Charlie Simpson's Apocalypse" (the tragic collision of "freaks" and "straights" in a small midwestern town)

Supplementary Books: Wolfe, THE ELECTRIC KOOL-AID ACID TEST; Gail Sheehy, PANTHERMANIA.

Writing Problems: How does each writer enter into a "private world" separated from the mainstream culture? What does each article contribute to our understanding of the drug and youth cultures? What private worlds (in the school, in the community) exist all around us?

These three thematic units, devised from the Wolfe anthology, are suggestive of the possible arrangements which new journalistic writing affords. Creative teachers will surely develop others.

TWO SEQUENCES OF ASSIGNMENTS

Although space does not permit the description of a complete sequence of writing assignments, we can sketch some sample units for discussion and composition which have proved most successful in our own classrooms. Many of the teacher's familiar assignments remain appropriate, for the purpose of the course continues to be the education of the students in the art of writing readable and lively expository and analytical essays. We hope that a certain transference of vitality in language will occur as the students familiarize themselves with the anthology. Although the essays in the anthology are not exactly the type of expository essays students will write in high school and college, the teacher can justifiably urge the students to imitate some of the stylistic techniques and verbal play, thus relating expository writing to the more exciting "creative" writing courses which the students may have had in high school. By doing so, the teacher may increase the students' sense of what is imaginatively possible in nonfictional prose.

I. An interesting three-part assignment may be built around a traditional goal of the composition course, the students' achievement of control over a flexible, interesting persona. First, we had the class read the selection from George Plimpton's PAPER LION. Plimpton provides a first-person account of his humiliating appearance as quarterback in a few plays of a Detroit Lions exhibition football game. The classroom discussion focused on how Plimpton was able to avoid seeming self-centered and egocentric, even though he was the center of attention for an entire stadium full of fans. Clearly it was the manner in which he told his story. Instead of saying "I did this...and I did that...and then I...," Plimpton decided to exaggerate his misadventures and mistakes. Then, relieved of the temptation to dwell with self-pity on his own sense of failure, he was able to relate in a detached manner how some of the professionals on the team took his failure so seriously and solicitously tried to revive his spirits. Plimpton succeeded both in slipping out from under the first-person burden of seeming self-important and in placing the reader's attention on the deeper human relationships that his escapade had unexpectedly revealed.

The students were then asked to choose events from their own lives in which they were the centers of attention, not simply detached observers. While no student had ever been placed in a situation as artificially dramatic as Plimpton's, all had been "on the spot" at one time or another. The writing assignment required a short autobiographical essay (3-5 pages) in the first-person, taking care not to sound egocentric. We urged the students to consider taking a certain amount of poetic license with the details of their stories--rearranging time sequences; heightening dialogue; setting scenes up; writing, in Wolfe's words, "like a novel" in order to create psychological

and emotional as opposed to merely literal veracity--but very few did anything striking during the early weeks of the course. As the term progressed more students tried their wings in rather daring flights, but the hesitancy that afflicted most students was disturbing. In some cases it was surely a lack of imagination, but in others there seemed to be a genuine equivocation concerning the ethics of "fictionalizing" facts. Clearly, the teacher must work hard at this point to illustrate the difference between falsehood or lying and the ambivalent nature of virtually all sophisticated uses of language. Until the students acquire a certain open-minded flexibility in their language habits, they probably will read no better than they write.

The final stage of the first assignment asked the students to analyze the selection from Norman Mailer's autobiographical THE ARMIES OF THE NIGHT. We encouraged the students to pretend that this selection was in effect an essay submitted for the preceding composition assignment. The students, having just struggled with the difficult problems of self-presentation, were asked to evaluate and comment upon how engagingly Mailer presented himself as the center of attention during his "open-field" arrest at the Pentagon in 1967. Compared to their own efforts, Mailer's writing seemed highly egocentric, especially because he used the unusual third-person "Mailer." But the students were also able to see how Mailer's highly self-conscious prose added a new dimension as it enabled him to be both actor and observer at the same time. Mailer somewhat whimsically defines the demands of creating his "protagonist," explaining that

> an eyewitness who is a participant but not a vested partisan is required, further he must be not only involved, but ambiguous in his own proportions, a comic hero, which is to say, one cannot happily resolve the emphasis of the category--is he finally comic, a ludicrous figure with mock-heroic associations; or is he not unheroic, and therefore embedded somewhat tragically in the comic? Or is he both at once, and all at once? (ARMIES OF THE NIGHT, NY: Signet, 1968, p. 67).

The purpose of this three-part assignment was initially to make the students more self-conscious about the delicacies of thrusting themselves forward in written language, but ultimately the purpose was to suggest that personality in writing is as much a matter of how one performs verbally as who one is. The verbal pyrotechnics of the new journalism style heightened the students' awareness of this second point.

II. A more comprehensive series of assignments can be organized around the central concern of virtually all new journalism--how the writer achieves the sense of reality in his work. James Mills' essay, "The Detective," which first appeared in LIFE magazine, offers the students a good introduction to creating the atmosphere of life as it is. We found it not only helpful but exciting to combine this reading assignment with a study of the detective shows currently appearing on television--e.g., "Kojak," "Police Story," "The Streets of San Francisco," "Columbo," etc. "Kojak," like the Mills piece, thrives on an evocation of the toughness of New York streets and precincts. To the average American, "Kojak" is probably the most realistic detective show on TV; it partakes of the language of Mills' detective George Barrett:

> "I'm obsessed with the idea I've got to win, and these animals can smell it. No one's going to mess with me and win because I've been around, I've been up against the bad guys. These animals on Broadway? I'll eat them up. I've got the tools and I know how to use them. If I can't get the best of the guy with punches, I'll kick him, and if he's a better kicker than I am, I'll go with the stick or the jack, and if I have to, I'll use my gun." (Wolfe, p. 260)

Students are able to perceive that "warmer" shows such as "The Streets of San Francisco," which plays heavily on the personal relationship between Sgt. Steve Keller and Lt. Mike Stone, and "psychological" puzzlers such as "Columbo" are more fantasy than fact. The only detective show that challenges "Kojak" is "Police Story,"

largely because of consultant and ex-policeman Joseph Wambuagh's commitment to keep the program as faithful as possible to the policeman's life as he knew it in Los Angeles. One suspects that this show is indeed realistic in its portrayal of some of the average duties of the routine suburban policeman in sunny, spacious Los Angeles. But audiences will not perceive it as being more realistic than "Kojak," because "Kojak" presents the stereotyped life of a big-city cop as those of us who are not policemen often imagine it to be. In matters of realism, presentation and evocation are surely as important as fidelity to fact; and in translating life into a representational medium, a writer must struggle with the various manners of fictionalizing. Realism is a marriage of fact and fantasy.

Tom Wolfe does not emphasize this point enough in his introductory essay on the new journalism. He does discuss four major techniques of realism that the new reporting borrows from the nineteenth-century realistic novel: (1) scene-by-scene construction; (2) recording of dialogue in full; (3) third-person point-of-view, i.e., "presenting every scene to the reader through the eyes of a particular character"; (4) the recording of everyday gestures, habits, manners, and customs that are symbolic of people's status life (Wolfe, pp. 31-2). What he forgets to point out sufficiently is that we often do not measure literary representation against life itself but against the representation of something imaginary. Lt. Kojak is not real because he is exactly like New York homicide detectives (he is not); he is real because we see him in contrast to figures that are patently more imaginary, like Lt. Mike Stone or Lt. Columbo (this is not to deny these fugures their own measure of reality within other contexts--Columbi, e.g., has certain "realistic" characteristics that strike us as such because they violate the "New York tough" stereotype).

Several analytical writing assignments can grow out of the discussion of Mills' essay and the TV shows. First, the students can analyze the literary techniques of realism in Mills' essay. This can be followed with a more flexible assignment in which the students may choose to analyze TV detective shows as a genre or individually. This assignment would cover about a month, since the students will need to watch at least four or five episodes of a program in order to perceive the devices of plot structuring, characterization, and setting that are continuously employed. Finally, the students can return to Wolfe's four techniques and analyze any essay in the anthology in terms of one or all of these techniques.

Discussions and assignments like these will give the students a solid footing in the feature of new journalism that Wolfe identifies as central--realism. But if the sales of science fiction books mean anything, the teenager's attention will also have been drawn to an element in these essays that Wolfe omits from his definition of the new genre--the extensive use of fantasy. In his effort to contrast the new reporting to the contemporary neo-fabulist novel, Wolfe never develops fantasy as part of his definition. The class, however, can gain a sense of exploring new territory and improving on Wolfe's introductory essay by discussing and writing about this pervasive element. We find it even in such a recent work as Woodward and Bernstein's ALL THE PRESIDENT'S MEN (the initial reporting that appeared in the WASHINGTON POST is not new journalism; the book, however, is). The fantasy that the reporters entertain as to the ultimate scope of the activities of the President's men (even that Haldeman would stop at nothing) plays an important role in moving the investigation and the reader forward (even when we "know" all the facts).

In the anthology, the students can read such essays as the selections from Joe McGinniss's THE SELLING OF THE PRESIDENT 1968 and Wolfe's representation of Ken Kesey's paranoia in THE ELECTRIC KOOL-AID ACID TEST. But by far and away the master of fantasy and fact is the head of the National Affairs Desk of ROLLING STONE magazine, Dr. Hunter S. Thompson. In his essay "The Kentucky Derby is Decadent and Depraved," Thompson shows how a reporter's horrorshow apprehensions can enable him to write a story virtually from the inside out; perceiving that the central feature of

Derby day is the drunken mania of the "whiskey gentry" and not the race, Thompson abandons himself to the spirit of the event and is virtually a catalyst in the story itself. His predictions or fantasies of disaster never materialize (e.g., there is no Black Panther riot in the face of 20,000 massed National Guard troops from Fort Knox), but as in an oblique, psychotic reflection they convey the sense of what the Kentucky Derby must <u>really</u> be like. Other complex treatments of the mixture of fantasy and fact are usually available to the class in the form of films. The teacher can select a movie that seems realistic and have the class analyze its imaginary construction of actuality. We have successfully used LAST TANGO IN PARIS, but less sophisticated films (for example, SERPICO or THE GODFATHER, PART II) would be more suitable for high school audiences.

Clearly, the foregoing assignments are only examples of what worked for a few classes. Any course in the new journalism must be receptive to rapid changes in society. The remarkable feature of this course is that it almost always provides the students with the opportunity to study the multifarious aspects of our contemporary popular culture through the critical and reflective medium of expository writing. By applying to nonfiction the sophisticated narrative techniques of the short story and novel, popular magazine writing has demonstrated new possibilities for the imaginative use of prose. Whether articles by new journalists are used as models for young writers' emulation or for a consideration of America's social transformation, the teaching of nonfiction has tremendous potential. The masters of the traditional essay deserve their time-honored place in our curriculum, but so, we believe, do the contemporary masters. Although we may not be able to accept Tom Wolfe's bold proclamation that new journalism has "knocked out the novel as literature's main event," we must admit that it has revitalized our classes in composition and made the teaching of nonfiction anything but dull.

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<u>SHOPTALK</u>:

"He is disillusioned with his child, says Vladimir Zworykin, who adds wryly that the best part about it is the on-off switch. But unlike his child, investor Zworykin's name is not a household word. Many persons have contributed to television, but it was under the direction of Russian-born Zworykin that the basics for this age's entertainment were perfected by the Radio Corp. of America. Zworykin, now 85 and retired, was a 17-year-old student in Leningrad when he began to work on an 'electronic eye,' a primitive television picture tube. 'We wanted to reproduce the human eye,' he said, and had no thought of its potential. But TV is still a baby, to him. 'It's in its infancy,' he said in an interview. 'I don't mean technologically, I mean socially. Television could be of terrific value for human purposes. But it is not used that way. There is too much violence, too much crime. People are hypnotized by it. Its (sic) contaminating our society.'" (LOS ANGELES TIMES, February 24, 1975, p. I-2)

After doing a brief article, a highly critical one, on Willie Mays, sportswriter Glenn Dickey talked to a number of baseball people. While many of them privately agreed that Mays had it coming, at least one man questioned Dickey's judgment. "You know, there was nothing but truth in that article. All the players know it, It's too bad he's the way he is, but I don't think he could help it. When you're told for 20 years that you're the greatest, it's hard not to believe it." And, added Gallagher, "Even though it was true, you shouldn't have written that because he was an authentic hero and kids need heroes to look up to." (Glenn Dickey, THE JOCK EMPIRE: ITS RISE AND DESERVED FALL, Radnor, PA: Chilton, 1974, pp. 32-33.)

FROM PYGMALION TO MY FAIR LADY

Suzanne Milner, Orange Coast College, Costa Mesa, California

Any man worthy of calling himself an artist would surely shudder at the prospect of having his work transformed into another medium. Any initial excitement he might have would quickly be quelled after the editor's first few slices. Understandably, as an artist, he would dread the minor changes, for the mere fact that they were changes, and fear any major ones which could conceivably alter his message. Perhaps this is why when, MY FAIR LADY was released in 1964, it opened under its present title rather than PYGMALION. Although it was greeted with acclaim by nearly everyone who saw it, essentially it was a very different creation from Mr. Shaw's original inspiration. However, what is remarkable is that, in spite of each author's radically different interpretations, the story of Eliza's transformation, regardless of the medium, is irresistably appealing.

Lerner's story line mirrors Shaw's almost precisely. Both show how a poor "flahr gel" is able to better her station in life by improving her English. Yet, they differ significantly in their physical structure. That is, Lerner in his version of MY FAIR LADY, builds the plot-theme around the musical selections. Shaw, on the other hand, uses the relationship between Eliza and Professor Higgins as the basis for organizing his acts. The manner in which the authors have placed emphasis on the differing aspects of the story line accounts for the deviation between their works. Ironically, it is the same emphasis which has allowed each to emerge victorious over the medium which binds him.

The musical, for example, includes many scenes such as "Just You Wait," "The Rain in Spain," and "Ascott Gavott," not associated with the 1912 edition of PYGMALION. Yet, it is probably these selections in particular which are largely responsible for making the motion picture one of the most outstanding musicals ever produced. Without a doubt, on every level, each musical sequence is largely unparalleled. Each is also a reflection of the brilliant and innovative ideas Lerner added.

"Just You Wait," Eliza's famous reply to Professor Higgin's never-ending-instruction, is placed directly after a slow number. ("I'm An Ordinary Man.") It serves to heighten the musical tempo and allows Eliza and the audience to release the much needed tension from the previous learning sequences. Technically, edge diffusion enhances Eliza's dream-like fantasy and adds the first touch of visual variance since, "Wouldn't It Be Lovely?"

Of the three numbers, "The Rain in Spain" is the most important. In this scene, Eliza overcomes her cockney dialect (and with it her cockney mannerisms). The scene begins quietly but builds to a rapid crescendo. Higgins and Pickering stage a mock bull fight, a brief tango ensues, and the sequence ends with the three of them collapsed on the sofa. The impromptu setting, the actor's spontaneous improvisations, and the audience's unexpected anticipation of the scene all combine to make it one of Lerner's most memorable contributions.

"Ascott Gavott" is the last of the three numbers which is especially associated with MY FAIR LADY. It closely parallels Pygmalion's Garden scene, but the setting is different. The race track replaces the garden and allows the photographer, the late Harry Stradling, to take certain technical liberties to accentuate Lerner's drama. For example, although photographed in color, the setting and costuming are chiefly done in black and white. This contrast, combined with a rapid succession of black and white stills flashed on the screen to simulate the horse race is interesting not only from an asthetic standpoint but also a psychological one. It suggests that the people of the day, exist in a world closed to change, color and feeling.

A world in which carefully bored expressions are too scared to deviate from tradition. This, in turn, stresses everything which Shaw and Higgins were fighting. That is, it has been proven by numerous linguists that the English language is based on a phonemically "impossible" oral tradition. Yet, no matter how impractical, the culture and tradition of the English speaking populace will continue to prevent its reform.

Unlike Lerner, Shaw could not rely on "movieland's magic" to stress his special effects. Consequently, there is no emphasis on spectacle. In fact, the climatic ballroom scene in MY FAIR LADY, is only alluded to. Therefore, Shaw concentrates on developing the play's action line around the professor and Eliza's relationship. His technique is unique in that it utilizes a variety of non-theatrical devices.

First, he includes a number of significant elements in the play which are not necessarily intended to be used in the production. Rather, these elements aid the reader not fortunate to view a performance. For example, many scenes are included in the book which, according to Shaw's preface, "for ordinary theatrical use. . . should be omitted." The majority of them, such as Eliza's first bath, and her initial lessons, chiefly serve to develop her character. A theater audience, given a skilled actress could witness her development first hand. The mere reader, however, may need the added material to justify Eliza's later transformation.

The reading audience is further indebted to Shaw in Pygmalion's opening pages. In this case, he has printed all of Eliza's lines phonetically. "Te-oo banches o voylets trod in the mad." This lets the reader actually "hear" the cockney dialect. Moreover, it makes him aware of the great difficulty facing Mr. Higgins.

Perhaps, the greatest advantage the reader has over the viewer is that unlike the theatergoer he has the opportunity to read the epilogue. In the sequel, which is not part of the play itself, Eliza ends with Freddy rather than the professor. It is this central break which separates MY FAIR LADY from PYGMALION.

Shaw concludes the book with a powerful collection of arguments. It analyzes the characters and explains why Eliza could not and did not marry Higgins. It is disconcerning to note Shaw's excellent portrayal of Eliza would cause any reader to have misgivings about the outcome. That Shaw would even have to write such a justification is unforgiveable. Perhaps, however, it unlocks the secret as to why two versions exist. Regarding the ending, Lerner's statement, "I am not certain he (Shaw) is right" is certainly weak. It is doubtful that on the basis of this feeling alone that Lerner would refute Shaw's statements. Therefore, I think it is necessary to look into the film process itself, to understand why Lerner's Eliza married Higgins.

Motion pictures, unlike written mediums, require actors, studios, cameramen (et al) and most importantly an audience. Consequently, if a movie folds, it is an expensive experiment. Therefore, producers try to operate under guidelines, one of which is known as selective exposure. It states that "any persuasive communication tends not to reach the very people it is designed to influence because people tend to be exposed to relatively little information that disagrees with them." (Freedman, Godsmith and Sears, eds. SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1970) Since the vast multitudes of movie goers are middle or upperclass owing to the fact that they can afford to pay today's high film prices, financially it is more realistic to produce movies in keeping with their ideals, and those ideals are not exemplified by situations in musical comedies in which the heroine does not marry the hero. Therefore, unwilling to lose money, they rarely gamble on uncertainties. Instead, the traditional is carefully revised in an effort to meet the expectations of their presumed audience. In accord then with popular expectations, many screen writers, perhaps such as Lerner, have been forced to perpetuate a myth of unreality due to a combination of social and financial circumstances.

Nevertheless, whatever the reasons, the difference in interpretations allows Lerner to write a musical comedy while Shaw must concentrate on dramatizing the paradox in character relationships. Yet, except for romantics, the overriding significance of the ending is of no real importance, chiefly because it does not alter the theme.

As any good playwright, Shaw also adheres to theatrical convention. His stage properties, for example, serve more significant purposes than merely decorating the set. The chocolates in Act II are a case in point. In Higgin's household, unlike those of Lisson Grove, they are not a luxury. Therefore, they are displayed in canisters and in abundance. In this scene, Eliza has come to ask the professor for lessons. He insults her and she turns to leave. If she goes, there will be no experiment, no transfiguration and no play. Consequently, Shaw and Higgins must find a way to keep her there. Thus, Higgins snatches a chocolate from the piano and offers it to Eliza. Happily she accepts it and stays. In this case, the candy has become the means whereby Shaw can further underscore Eliza's poverty and her hunger to overcome it.

The slippers in Act 4 serve like purposes. In this scene Eliza is furious. She was a tremendous success at the garden party but neither the professor nor Mr. Pickering have congratulated her. Rather, they have complimented each other on their achievements and openly remarked that they are glad it's over. All retire except Eliza. Shortly thereafter, Higgins returns for his slippers. By now Eliza cannot control herself and when he inquires as to their whereabouts she hurls them at his face! Her movement is marvelous. It shows that she is still a lower-class woman unable to get even with Higgins by any means other than physical violence. But, even more impressive is the script which follows. In it Higgins suggests that Eliza need not work in a flower shop but rather that she could marry. This time she does not hit him. Shaw reports that she "looks at him, speechless and does not stir. The look is quite lost on him." Her transformation is complete. She has shown herself to be a lady worthy of putting a man down with a glance. More importantly, she has beaten Higgins at his own game. That is, the man who taught her about elegance is not capable of even knowing that he has been insulted. The slippers which Eliza obediently fetched and carried for Professor Higgins, eventually served Shaw's dualistic purposes. That is, in less than two pages of dialogue they became the touchstone for contrasting Eliza's behavior as it was, with what it has become.

Similarly, Shaw's adroit handling of sets reveals and advances character development. The homes of Eliza, Henry and Mrs. Higgins are indicative of this. Eliza lives in a small room off an alley. It is marked by poverty. A broken window pane shields her from the elements and a gas heater complete with a meter keeps her from the dampness. Her home alone is motivation for learning to talk properly. That she has hope of someday bettering herself is reflected, at least, in part, from the torn newspaper clippings hanging on her wall. They show a fashion plate of ladies dresses, something at this point in life Eliza could never possibly own. There is a birdcage in the window but sadly "its only inhabitant died long ago." It perhaps is used to evoke pity for her.

Nevertheless, the professor's house in sharp contrast is a cluttered mass of little nicknacks, crowded furniture and linguistic paraphenalia. All clustered to give the impression of a terribly disorganized person. Further, it indicates the disposition of a man who cares little about what others think about him. Indeed, the kind of man who would treat a duchess as if she were a guttersnipe. His housekeeping later acts to reinforce his forgetfulness. Surely, a man who lives in such disorder cannot be expected to remember where he last placed his slippers. Thus, the utter jumble of his possessions gives further credibility to Shaw's characters. In spite of the surrounding litter, one object is clearly visible. It is a bird

cage containing the expected bird. This forces the reader to make a comparison between Eliza's lifestyle and the professor's. Symbolically, it suggests that materially the professor has everything Eliza doesn't.

Mrs. Higgin's house is as unlike Henry's as is Eliza's. Her furniture, like her life, is orderly and schematically laid out. Each chair and table is meticulously placed, an excellent reflection of her good taste. The same taste which reproduced at garden parties and "at homes" is viewed as polished etiquette. The portrait directly opposite the door recounts her earlier adventures, however. Although a seemingly unlikely revolutionary, the Rossetian gown in which Mrs. Higgins is painted, according to Shaw, "defied the fashion of her youth." Perhaps the portrait symbolically foreshadows Henry's life as well. That is, if Henry's rebel streak was a direct inheritance from his mother, as the portrait would lead readers to believe, then it follows that the now radical Henry could, later, comply with future conventions of the day, as did his mother.

The writing desk located in the corner of the drawing room, figures importantly in all of Mrs. Higgins opening scenes. Chiefly because the blocking calls for her to be seated at it. As Chaplin was associated with his hats, Betty Grable with bathing suits, so Mrs. Higgins is linked with her desk. Perhaps, this is to suggest that she is a person who fulfills obligations (answering correspondence) and attends to the niceties of life. Whatever the reasons, the old adage "a picture is worth a thousand words" certainly applies to Shaw, with a piece of candy, a slipper or even a simple drawing room he has transformed the fundamental stage properties into fixtures for illuminating his characters.

Shaw and Lerner differ considerably in the techniques they use to develop their stories. Yet, whether the curtain falls down on MY FAIR LADY in London or PYGMALION in the United States, cries of "You did it" will ring through the audience.

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SHOPTALK:

Anthony Burgess, author of A CLOCKWORK ORANGE, writes in the NY TIMES, April 20, 1975, pp. 1, 15 ("Arts and Leisure" section) "On the Hopelessness of Turning Good Books Into Films." He argues that rarely, if ever, are first-class novels turned into first-class films and then notes, "It will be argued against me that there have been many brilliant film adaptations from fiction--"Gone with the Wind," "Rebecca," "The Birds," "Of Human Bondage." Yes, but the brilliant adaptations are nearly always of fiction of the second or third class. I thought Polanski's "Rosemary's Baby" was a remarkable film, and it kept remarkably close to the book, but a comparison of the two shows that Polanski had all the style and Ira Levin none. It is style, exploitation of language to the end of creating an idosyncratic closed world which illuminates the open world without, that is the mark of literature of the first class. One of the mysterious laws underlying film adaptation seems to be this: director may be inferior of author, director may be superior of author but director may not be equal of author."

"It all comes back to words. This is why literature is superior to the other arts and indeed, why there can be a hierarchy of arts, with ballet at the bottom and sculpture a few rungs above it. Film, seeming to have all the resources, and more, of literature, still cannot produce anything as great as a great work of literature. Trying to adapt such great works is, in a sense, endeavoring to find out why this should be so. It has been heartening, recently, to see original scripts of a very high standard being written for the screen, without the intermediacy of the book. But the struggle to put Dostoevski and Mann there as well still goes on."

THE POP/ROCK LYRICS HYPE OR I WALKED OUT OF CLASS HO-HUMMING THE MELODY

Charles Suhor, Supervisor of English, New Orleans Public Schools

In some schools the use of pop/rock lyrics in English class has been "in" for such a long time that it's now "out." In others it has been "out" for so long, it's "in" again. Still others seem to have long ago assimilated pop/rock lyrics into the English program. Good use is being made of them, but nobody gets very excited about the idea.

The consideration of pop/rock lyrics as literary expression began in the sixties. Rock-and-roll had graduated from the simple-minded bubble gum music of the mid-fifties--Frankie Avalon singing "Gingerbread," the Platters cooing through "The Great Pretender"--into a more varied and complex form that could include songs of social protest, lyrics with the private symbols of youth culture, unorthodox time signatures like 5/4, and elements of jazz and classical music.

Don't worry, I'm not going to go into a history of rock. That's been done often enough in every source from SCOPE magazine to extremely serious tomes by Chuck Berry scholars. This article is about (1) the claims that have been made for pop/rock lyrics as literary expression--claims that are best guardedly ambiguous, and at worst downright pretentious; and (2) the range of valid uses that can be made of pop/rock lyrics in the English program--as suggested by classroom teachers.

The first important anthology to present rock as poetry was Richard Goldstein's THE POETRY OF ROCK (1969). Goldstein created the prototypical rock-lyric hype, setting a model for doublespeak on the question of rock lyrics as literature. He claimed straightaway that you can't really separate the words from the total context of the song, then he proceeded to do exactly that for the next 140 pages. Moreover, Goldstein's textual comments were more literate, witty, and entertaining than most of the lyrics. Goldstein had a gift for predisposing the reader to enjoy pop/rock verse that compared unfavorably to the worst of Edgar Guest.

Jerry Walker's popular 1969 Scholastic anthology, POP/ROCK LYRICS, is also adroitly elusive in approaching the rock-lyrics-as-poetry question. His introduction never says that rock lyrics are poetry, but his comparison of lyricist and poet suggests that since they are both in the same business--"saying the things that need to be said"--qualitative questions need not be pursued.

> Often the somebody who says these things is either a songwriter (lyricist) or a poet. Both try to extract from life its essence and present it as either an idea or a story. Both lyricist and poet use the same techniques...Read and study these lyrics; compare them with poems you know. Very much alike, aren't they? Then compare the pop/rock lyricists with the poets. Both could write about either trivial or world-shaking matters, using everyday language. The result would be neither lyric nor poetic. Let us be glad that they convey their feelings and thoughts--whether trivial or important--in pleasing rhyme. (Underlines are mine.)

In THE POETRY OF RELEVANCE, a two-volume series that juxtaposes pop/rock lyrics and poetry on the same theme, editor Homer Hogan passes the problem of doggerel on to the teacher. In the second volume (1970) he writes "I also include song lyrics and poems that vary considerably in quality and effectiveness so that instructors can challenge students to discover why one song or poem works better than another, thereby unearthing secrets of the writer's craft."

No advice is given to the teacher whose student might find the inanity of a particular pop/rock lyric more "effective" than, say, a sonnet by Milton, the "author's craft" notwithstanding. Is the teacher then, supposed to "challenge" the students to

"discover" the superiority of Milton over Paul Williams? Or should the student's response be respected and Milton dismissed to shake his tin cup of verse on another corner?

In the introduction to Stephanie Spinner's 1970 volume, ROCK IS BEAUTIFUL: AN ANTHOLOGY OF AMERICAN LYRICS, 1953-1968, Nat Hentoff--usually a more precise thinker--handles the question of rock lyrics and poetry as ineptly as anyone else. First comes the inevitable disclaimer noting that rock lyrics "can be banal or piercingly evocative." Then Hentoff informs us that "there is no reason to limit rock lyrics to English courses" --surely one of the strangest statements of 1953-1968, or any other period. The crap detector explodes as Hentoff concludes in inflated prose: "In its natural habitat--at home, in jukeboxes, at dances, in the global village that is the transistor radio--rock asks, and sometimes tries to answer, all manner of questions."

WHAT DO TEACHERS SAY?

At an English department leaders' meeting in New Orleans Public Schools, I raised the question of pop/rock lyrics, fully expecting traditionalists to stand up for the classics and the innovators to talk about reaching the kids. I was happily astonished to find that the teachers weren't really interested in the quality/relevance hang-up that has prompted the turgid, mealy-mouthed pronunciamentos of rock anthologists and commentators.

They were much more concerned with the range of uses that pop/rock lyrics can serve in a classroom where the teacher is genuinely concerned with communication. I took notes as they described applications of pop/rock lyrics that develop several kinds of language skills--not just analysis of poetry, and certainly not just bringing in LP's so the class could dig on the top forty.

Later I organized the department leaders' ideas into a list and asked them anonymously to rate the ideas on a scale of 1 to 5--from "unusable" to "excellent." The results give some sense of the varied uses of pop/rock lyrics in the classroom, along with some interesting evaluations of the ideas by the thirty-eight English department leaders.

Items in the original list were randomly ordered. The order below goes from ideas most valued to those least valued by the teachers. The figures beneath each rating indicate the number of teachers who chose each evaluation for the item.

1 Use the provocative title of a current pop/rock selection as the basis for a free writing exercise. (e.g., "Papa Don't Take No Mess," "Tell Me Something Good," "I Shot the Sheriff.")

unusable	poor	fair	good	excellent
0	1	1	19	17

2. Play a current pop/rock recording as the basis for a free writing exercise.

unusable	poor	fair	good	excellent
0	1	5	15	17

3. Have the students make up original brief narratives in which pop/rock song titles are included as part of the text. (e.g., Maybe "You're No Good" at "Kung Fu Fighting," but "Only You" can give me "Everlasting Love.")

unusable	poor	fair	good	excellent
0	0	5	24	9

Items 1-3 emphasize open-endedness, while items 4-5 focus on traditional analysis. Although the products of item 3 aren't exactly cognitive dynamite, the teachers indicated that even reluctant writers enjoy preparing the narratives.

4. Compare pop/rock lyrics on a given theme with poems written on that theme by other poets (e.g., Frost, Shakespeare, etc.)

unusable	poor	fair	good	excellent
1	1	7	13	16

5. Analyze pop/rock lyrics as you would other poetry.

unusable	poor	fair	good	excellent
0	1	10	17	10

6. Have students write (and when possible, sing) original pop/rock songs.

unusable	poor	fair	good	excellent
0	4	7	15	12

The teachers seemed to agree that encouraging original student songs is good, but not very productive except for the minority who enjoy composing and performing.

7. Study slang, dialect and usage in different pop/rock selections. (e.g., Contrast Black dialect with Country and Western, etc.)

unusable	poor	fair	good	excellent
0	0	8	19	9

8. Read and talk about magazines that feature song lyrics and/or articles about pop/rock performers (HIT PARADE, SPEC, TIGER BEAT, ROLLING STONE, etc.).

unusable	poor	fair	good	excellent
0	2	14	17	5

Items 7 and 8 get into socio-psychological aspects of pop/rock. The large number of good and excellent ratings for item 7 is offset by the fact that two teachers failed to respond to this item.

9. Write lyrics of the most popular pop/rock songs on the board or flash them on an opaque projector so students can read them and talk about them or--of they so choose--copy them down.

unusable	poor	fair	good	excellent
0	1	12	16	7

This technique is popular at the middle and junior high school levels, where teachers report that students who read lyrics to their favorite songs often discover that they were singing the wrong words--especially when the vocalist doesn't articulate clearly or when the students' dialect differs from the vocalist's. Voluntary writing of the lyrics is quite common, even among students who usually shrink from writing. (Two teachers declined to rate this item; one failed to rate item 10.)

10. Study the history of rock music and its major performers.

unusable	poor	fair	good	excellent
1	5	17	12	2

This item, justifiably rated by the teachers as least appealing, calls up images of the bio-historical approach that reduced literature to an information game for generations of students.

A "halo effect" is suggested by the fact that few teachers utilized the "poor" and "unusable" categories. A section on the questionnaire for open-ended comments revealed that the department leaders did indeed feel strongly that pop/rock lyrics are extremely effective for motivating inner-city students. One printed I HATE IT in big big letters, but still felt that pop/rock lyrics were helpful in the classroom.

CONCLUSION

The main point I draw from all this is that we can and should be hard-nosed about the poetic quality of pop/rock lyrics as poetry when we approach them as poetry; but the lyrics-as-poetry approach is extremely limited in light of the broader possibilities for using pop/rock lyrics in the classroom.

Analysis of pop/rock lyrics is limited for several reasons, perhaps the least of which is the oft-repeated argument that lyrics were intended to be sung and not read silently. That argument is a variation on the old intentional fallacy, and it fails to deal with good lyrics that are wedded to bad melodies, lyrics (like many of Shakespeare's) that can stand analysis as poetry, and lyrics that would remain unspeakably bad even if you could match them up, syllable to semiquaver, with RITES OF SPRING. (See my satire, "The Poetry of Schlock," in MEDIA & METHODS, Jan. 1970.)

In the classroom the first danger of viewing pop/rock lyrics as poetry is that close analysis, no matter how sympathetically carried out, might kill the lyrics for the student. Many teachers now see close analysis as an unwarranted flight from the student's response to the text. Turning a New Critic's eye on pop/rock lyrics is likely to do little for the students' appreciation of close analysis and less for their appreciation of rock--which is, after all, their music. And as Dwight Burton has noted in LITERATURE STUDY IN THE HIGH SCHOOLS, the teacher who works too hard at bringing youth culture into the classroom "may appear to the student as essentially phony,... attempt/ing/ to buy his...attention and his loyalty."

A similar problem arises in the now-popular method of comparing pop/rock lyrics with traditional materials in thematic units. The teacher who undertakes a Milton/Paul Williams comparison is in danger of appearing snobbish when applying critical yardsticks that show Milton's brilliance. The teacher who "gets with it" and ignores literary values might appear to be patronizing the students.

Of course, in the best of all possible worlds we wouldn't be self-conscious about bringing pop/rock into the classroom because we'd have a better feeling for youth culture in the first place. And we wouldn't be defensive or apologetic about values and tastes that generally come with having lived longer, i.e., being "older," because we'd be stimulated rather than dismayed by new values and modes of artistic expression.

The real world is not quite together, though, so we must all exercise uncommon effort to apply small insights about youth culture in our schools. Why else would someone write, and other people read, 1,800 words on uses of pop/rock lyrics in the classroom?

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SHOPTALK:

"Some college basketball coaches may have a hard time signing Elmer Shotwell, a high school all-America sensation, a 6-foot guard who reportedly averaged 27 points and 12.8 rebounds a game last season for Gladden Corner High School.

Shotwell, reportedly a choice for all-Wea Creek Conference and Class C all-state, just doesn't exist.

He is the creation of the Wainwright, (Ind.) High School basketball coach, Phil Miller, who says he wanted to emphasize that anyone--even no one--can become a high school all-American.

Miller sent in the fictional Shotwell's statistics to a Massachusetts company that solicits players of all-America caliber and sends certificates to them. The 'all-American' also receives an order blank for a $18.95 book the company sells, listing the players.

Company was identified as High School All-americans, Suite 1168, Holden Green, Cambridge, Mass.

'I guess it's just one of these things where they want to sell you a book,' Miller said. 'My daughter was named on one of these things, the Society of Distinguished American High School Students or something, last year. They just wanted to sell her a book with her name in it.

'It's too bad, because it sort of takes away the meaning from the kids that really deserve recognition.'

Miller said the company promised to screen carefully all applicants and implied that the book would be sent to all college recruiters.

'I guess I could have nominated Charley Fastbreak with the same results,' Miller said.

Shotwell's certificate, sent to Miller, reads, 'High School All-American. This certificate is awarded to Elmer Shotwell in recognition of outstanding ability in basketball, sportsmanship and extracurricular activities.'

Miller said he became suspicious of the offer when it suggested he nominate up to four of his team as potential all-Americans.

'Nobody has four all-Americans,' he said.

Miller said not only is Shotwell a fabrication, there also is no Class C competition in Indiana and no Wea Creek Conference. There was a Gladden Corner High School 'about 60 years ago,' Miller said." (NY TIMES, April 20, 1975, "Sports" section.)

In one of her PSYCHOLOGY TODAY interviews, Mary Harrington Hall talked to Peter F. Drucker. Here is her first question and Drucker's first response.

MARY HARRINGTON HALL: "How can young people today know just where they might fit in this wide-open kind of world? How can they choose?"

PETER DRUCKER: "Here I am 58, and I still don't know what I am going to do when I grow up. My children and their respective spouses think I am kidding when I say that, but I am not. You know what I mean; they don't. Nobody tells them that life is not that categorized. And nobody tells them that the only way to find what you want is to create a job. Nobody worth his salt has ever moved into an existing job. That's for post-office clerks."

(PSYCHOLOGY TODAY, March 1968, p. 21.)

CURRENT READING: A Scholarly and Pedagogical Bibliography of Articles and Books, Recent and Old, about Popular Culture

Popular culture is a broad field, and the following bibliography must be understood to be suggestive and hardly exhaustive. Even the sub-topic of football (and that topic is really a sub-topic of sports literature) would run to hundreds of books and articles were it to border on completeness. But on the off-chance that even a fragmentary and admittedly most incomplete bibliography is not only better than none but also more helpful than none, the following lists may be of some assistance to some English teachers. Snobs will remain unimpressed, but since they rarely touch students anyway, they can be safely ignored. Other teachers, interested in touching students by first finding them, may find some things of value below.

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